

The Usual Suspects

by

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Pleased to meet you,
Hope you guessed my name
But what's puzzlin' you
Is the nature of my game

-The Rolling Stones

- Sympathy for
the Devil

1 BLACK

1

The lonely sound of a buoy bell in the distance. Water slapping against a smooth flat surface in rhythm. The creaking of wood.

Off in the very far distance, one can make out the sound of sirens.

SUDDENLY, a single match ignites and invades the darkness. It quivers for a moment. A dimly lit hand brings the rest of the pack to the match. A plume of yellow-white flame flares and illuminates the battered face of DEAN KEATON, age forty. His salty-gray hair is wet and matted. His face drips with water or sweat. A large cut runs the length of his face from the corner of his eye to his chin. It bleeds freely. An un-lit cigarette hangs in the corner of his mouth.

In the half-light we can make out that he is on the deck of a large boat. A yacht, perhaps, or a small freighter. He sits with his back against the front bulkhead of the wheel house. His legs are twisted at odd, almost impossible angles. He looks down.

A thin trail of liquid runs past his feet and off into the darkness. Keaton lights the cigarette on the burning pack of matches before throwing them into the liquid.

The liquid IGNITES with a poof.

The flame runs up the stream, gaining in speed and intensity. It begins to ripple and rumble as it runs down the deck towards the bow.

2 EXT. BOAT - NIGHT - BOW

2

A stack of oil drums rests on the bow. They are stacked on a palette with ropes at each corner that attach it to a huge crane on the dock. One of the barrels has been punctured at it's base. Gasoline trickles freely from the hole.

The flame is racing now towards the barrels. Keaton smiles weakly to himself.

The flame is within a few yards of the barrels when another stream of liquid splashes onto the gas. The flame fizzles out pitifully with a hiss.

Two feet straddle the flame. A stream of urine flows onto the deck from between them.

The sound of a fly zipping. Follow the feet as they move over to where Keaton rests at the wheel house.

CRANE UP to the waist of the unknown man. He pulls a pack of cigarettes out of one pocket and a strange antique lighter from the other. It is gold, with a clasp that folds down over the flint. The man flicks up the clasp with his thumb and strikes it with his index finger. It is a fluid motion, somewhat showy.

Keaton looks up at the man. A look of realization crosses his face. It is followed by frustration, anger, and finally resignation.

VOICE (O.S.)
How are you, Keaton?

KEATON
I'd have to say my spine was broken,
Keyser.

He spits the name out like it was poison.

The man puts the lighter back in his pocket and reaches under his jacket. He produces a stainless .38 revolver.

VOICE (O.S.)
Ready?

KEATON
What time is it?

The hand with the gun turns over, turning the gold watch on its wrist upward.

The sound of sirens is closer now. Headed this way.

VOICE (O.S.)
Twelve thirty.

Keaton grimaces bitterly and nods. He turns his head away and takes another drag.

The hand with the gun waits long enough for Keaton to enjoy his last drag before pulling the trigger.

GUNSHOT

The sound of Keaton's body slumping onto the deck.

MOVE OUT ACROSS THE DECK towards the bow. Below is the stream of gasoline still flowing freely.

The sound of the gasoline igniting. The flame runs in front of us towards the barrels, finally leaping up in a circle

around the drums, burning the wood of the pallet and licking the spouting stream as it pours from the hole.

MOVE OUT ACROSS THE DOCK, away from the boat.

The pier to which the boat is moored is littered with DEAD BODIES. Twenty or more men have been shot to pieces and lie scattered everywhere in what can only be the aftermath of a fierce fire-fight.

A CRANE COMES INTO VIEW. A huge loader for hoisting cargo onto waiting ships. The faint hum of its diesel engine grows slightly louder.

At the base of the crane is a tangle of cables and girders giving life and stability to the crane. The mesh of steel and rubber leaves a dark and open cocoon beneath the base of the crane.

MOVE INTO THE DARKNESS.

Sirens are close now. Almost here. The sound of fire raging out of control.

SIRENS BLARING. TIRES SQUEALING. CAR DOORS OPENING. FEET POUNDING THE PAVEMENT.

MOVE FURTHER, SLOWER, INTO THE DARKNESS.

Voices yelling. New light flickering in the surrounding darkness.

SUDDENLY, AN EXPLOSION.

Then silence. TOTAL BLACKNESS.

We hear the voice of ROGER "VERBAL" KINT, whom we will soon meet.

VERBAL (V.O.)

New York. - six weeks ago. A truck loaded with stripped gun parts got jacked outside of Queens. The driver didn't see anybody, but somebody fucked up. He heard a voice. Sometimes, that's all you need.

BOOM

3 INT. DARK APARTMENT - DAY - NEW YORK - SIX WEEKS PRIOR TO PRESENT DAY

The black explodes with the opening of a door into a dark room. Outside, the hall is filled with blinding white light.

out men in hoods with flashlights. They are laden with weapons.

VOICES
POLICE. SEARCH WARRANT. DON'T MOVE.

It is a blur of violent action and sound. Beams of flashlights cut the darkness in all directions.

FINALLY:

A dozen flashlights land on one man. He lies naked in bed, emerging from a deep sleep. He squints at the flood of blinding white light, more annoyed than frightened. He nearly laughs at the sound of countless guns cocking. He is MICHAEL McMANUS. Age twenty-eight.

VOICE (O.S.)
Michael McManus?

McMANUS
Yeah.

VOICE (O.S.)
Police. We have a warrant for
your arrest.

McMANUS
Will they be serving coffee downtown?

Two dozen black gloved hands grab him and yank him out of bed.

4 INT. HARDWARE STORE - DAY

4

TODD HOCKNEY, a dark, portly man in his thirties stands behind the counter ringing up a customer. Several others stand on line.

Hockney finishes with the first customer and turns to the second. This customer carries no items in his hands. He looks at Hockney with a steely, concentrated stare. The five customers behind him, all men in suits, watch closely.

HOCKNEY
Can I help you?

Hockney's voice is gruff and distinctly Long Island.

CUSTOMER #1
Todd Hockney?

HOCKNEY

Who are you?

All six customers INSTANTLY PRODUCE GUNS and aim them at Hockney.

CUSTOMER #1

Police.

HOCKNEY

We don't do gun repair.

5 EXT. STREET - NEW YORK - DAY

5

FRED FENSTER, a tall, thin man in his thirties strolls casually down the street. He is dressed conspicuously in a loud suit and tie with shoes that have no hope of matching. He smokes a cigarette and chews gum at the same time.

He happens to glance over his shoulder and notice a brown Ford sedan with four men in it cruising along the curb. He picks up his step a little. The Ford keeps up.

He looks ahead at the corner. He tries to look as comfortable as he can, checking his watch as though remembering an appointment he is late for. The Ford stays right on him.

SUDDENLY, he bolts. He gets no more than a few yards before cars pour out of every conceivable nook and cranny. Brakes are squealing, radios squawking, guns cocking. Fenster is surrounded instantly. He stops short and flaps his hands on his thighs in defeat.

6 INT. La LANTURNA RESTAURANT - DAY

6

An attractive man and woman walk quickly through the front of a small New York cafe. They are charged with nervous, excited energy.

The man is DEAN KEATON, a well dressed, sturdy looking man in his forties with slightly graying hair. He looks much better than he did in the opening scene. The woman with him is EDIE FINNERAN, age thirty-three, poised and attractive - Easily the calmer of the two.

They come to a staircase at the back of the restaurant leading down to a dark room. Edie takes Keaton's arm and stops him.

EDIE

Let me look at you.

Keaton is uncomfortable in his suit, or perhaps the situation. Still, he smiles with genuine warmth.

Edie straightens his tie and picks microscopic imperfections from his lapel.

EDIE (CONT'D)

Now remember, this is another kind of business. They don't earn your respect. You owe it to them. Don't stare them down but don't look away either. Confidence. They are fools not to trust you. That's the attitude.

KEATON

I'm having a stroke.

EDIE

You've come far. You're a good man. I love you.

Keaton blinks then stammers, looking for a response.

PAUSE

EDIE (CONT'D)

Live with it.

She kisses him and runs down the steps with Keaton close behind. Keaton playfully grabs her ass and she nearly stumbles down the stairs.

7

INT. RESTAURANT - DOWNSTAIRS

7

They come to the bottom of the steps giggling and jabbing each other. Once off the stairs they instantly transform as though hit with cold air. They assume a cool, professional exterior and walk two feet apart. One would look at them and see only two business associates here to ply their trade.

They walk across the dimly lit dining room to a table in the far corner where two men are already waiting. The first is STEPHEN YULE, age fifty-five, the other is ANTHONY SUMMERS, age sixty. Both men are impeccably dressed with a distinguished air. They stand and smile.

SUMMERS

Edie, nice to see you.

EDIE

Sorry we're late.

YULE

Nonsense. Sit, please.

SUMMERS

You must be Mr. Keaton.

EDIE

I'm sorry. Dean Keaton -

Summers' hand is already out.

SUMMERS

Anthony Summers. Pleased to meet you.

They shake hands. Keaton takes Yule's hand next.

YULE

Stephen Yule. My pleasure.

Everyone sits at the table. All faces are smiling.

LOW ANGLE: UNDER TABLE

Edie's hand reaches out and finds Keaton's leg. Her hand runs high up his inner thigh and squeezes firmly.

Her face is absolutely calm, giving no hint of what her hand is doing. Keaton smiles and clears his throat.

KEATON

Shall we begin.

8 EXT. La LANTURNA RESTAURANT

8

A blue Ford sedan pulls up in front of the restaurant. Five very serious looking men in suits get out and walk inside. In the lead is SPECIAL AGENT DAVID KUJAN (Pronounced Koo-yahn), U.S. CUSTOMS. Thirtyish, dark-haired and determined.

9 INT. RESTAURANT - UPSTAIRS

9

The five men fan out and scan the tables carefully. One of them walks up to the hostess and produces a badge.

10 INT. RESTAURANT - DOWNSTAIRS

10

YULE

Edie brought us your proposal and I'll be honest. We're very impressed. A bit skeptical, I must admit, but impressed.

KEATON

Skeptical.

SUMMERS

The concept is brilliant, we agree. But New York is hard on new restaurants. We

SUMMERS (cont'd)
want to be sure you'll have staying power. If we're going to give you this much money, how can we be sure we'll see our money come back long term?

Keaton looks at Edie and smiles confidently.

KEATON
It's simple gentlemen, design versatility. A restaurant that can change with taste without losing the overall aesthetic. Our atmosphere won't be painted on the walls.

SUMMERS
This was the part of the proposal that intrigued us, but I'm not sure I follow.

KEATON
Let's say for example -

VOICE (O.S.)
This I had to see myself.

Keaton looks up. He sees David Kujan. Behind him are the very serious looking guys in suits.

Keaton is not happy to see them.

KEATON
Dave. I'm in a meeting.

KUJAN
Time for another one.

KEATON
This is my attorney, Edie Finneran.
(Gesturing)
This is Anthony Summers and Stephen Yule from Manhattan Trust. Everyone, this is David Kujan.

KUJAN
Special Agent Kujan. U.S. Customs.
(Gestures to men behind him)
These gentlemen are with the New York police department. You look great, Keaton. Better than I would have thought.

SUMMERS
Is there a problem, Mr. Keaton?

KUJAN

The small matter of a stolen truck-load
of guns that wound up on a boat to
Ireland last night.

Summers and Yule's confusion is giving way to suspicion.

YULE

Mr. Keaton?

KEATON

If you will excuse us for a moment,
gentlemen.

KUJAN

We need to ask you some questions
downtown. You'll be quite a while.

Summers starts to get up.

SUMMERS

We should leave you to discuss whatever
this is.

KEATON

Please. Sit.

Keaton stands up and throws a wad of money on the table to
cover the check. He looks at Edie. She moves to stand, but he
sits her back down with a hand on her shoulder.

KEATON

Enjoy the meal.

(To Edie)

I'll call you.

Kujan takes him by the arm, but Keaton yanks away.

He looks out over the dozens of other faces in the
restaurant. Everyone is looking at him with some level of
surprise. If Keaton is humiliated by the whole affair, he
hides it well.

11 INT. HALLWAY - NIGHT

11

FOLLOW A PAIR OF FEET as they shuffle across the cement
floor. The shoes are shabby and worn, as are the wrinkled
pants that hang too low and loose at the cuffs. The right
foot is turned slightly inward and falls with a hard limp. It
is clear that the knee does not extend fully.

The sound of a steel door opening. The bottom corner of a
steel cage comes into view. Another set of feet falls into
step with the first. Another steel door and another set of

feet. Another door, another and another. Five pairs of feet walk single file down the hall.

The lame feet are in the front of the line. They come to another steel door, this one solid and covered with dents and rivets.

CRANE UP TO REVEAL:

ROGER KINT, VERBAL to his few friends. He has a deeply lined face, making his thirty-odd years a good guess at best. From his twisted left hand, we can see that he suffers from a slight but not debilitating palsy. Behind him are Dean Keaton, Fred Fenster, Mike McManus and Todd Hockney.

A police officer steps into the frame and opens the steel door.

Verbal steps through the door, followed by the rest.

VERBAL (V.O.)

It didn't make sense that I be there. I mean these guys were hard-core hijackers, but there I was. At that point, I wasn't scared, I knew I hadn't done anything they could do me for. Besides, it was fun. I got to make like I was notorious.

12 INT. LINE-UP ROOM

12

The five men are ushered into the room in front of a white wall painted with horizontal blue stripes. Each has a number at either end to denote the height of the man in front of it. Between these lines are thinner blue lines to tell the specific height in inches.

Bright lights shine on all of them. They squint, eyes adjusting.

Keaton leans forward a bit and looks at the men in line with him. He shares a look of familiarity with Fenster and then McManus. Hockney smiles at all of them.

McMANUS

(To Keaton)

Where you been, man?

VOICE (O.S.)

SHUT UP IN THERE. Alright, you all know the drill. When your number is called, step forward and repeat the phrase you've been given. Understand?

The men all nod.

VOICE (O.S.)
Number one. Step foreword.

Hockney takes a step forward. He looks directly into a mirror on the other side of the room. It is three feet square and we can make out faint light behind it. It is a two-way. He speaks in a complete dead-pan.

HOCKNEY
Hand-me-the-keys, you-fucking-cock-
sucker.

VOICE (O.S.)
Number two. Step Foreword.

McManus steps up and makes a gun with his thumb and forefinger. He mocks criminal intensity, pointing at the mirror. He camps up his line.

McMANUS
Give me the keys, you motherfucking,
cocksucking pile of shit, or I'll rip off
your -

VOICE (O.S.)
KNOCK IT OFF. Get back in line.

McManus steps back.

The rest of the men do their bit as Verbal speaks.

VERBAL (V.O.)
It was bullshit. The whole rap was a
setup. Everything is the cops' fault. You
don't put guys like that in a room
together. Who knows what can happen?

13 INT. INTERROGATION ROOM - NIGHT

13

Mike McManus sits in a chair in front of a white wall. He smiles at someone off-screen.

VERBAL (V.O.)
They drilled us all night. Somebody was pissed about that truck getting knocked off and the cops had nothing. They were hoping somebody would slip. Give them something to go on. They knew we wouldn't fight it because they knew how to lean on us. They'd been doing it forever. Our rights went right out the window. It was a violation. I mean disgraceful.

McManus chats casually and laughs at his own jokes.

VERBAL (V.O.)

They went after McManus first. He was a good guy. Crazy though. A top notch entry man.

VOICE (O.S.)

So where'd you dump the truck?

McMANUS

What truck?

VOICE (O.S.)

The truck with the guns, fucko.

McMANUS

You kill me, you really do. Where's my phone call?

VOICE (O.S.)

Right here. Suck it out.

McMANUS

Clever guy.

VOICE (O.S.)

You want to know what your buddy Fenster told us?

McMANUS

Do I look stupid enough to fall for that? Jesus Christ. Beat me if you gotta, but no more of the candy-land tactics, man.

VOICE (O.S.)

WHERE'S THE FUCKING TRUCK?

14 INT. INTERROGATION ROOM

14

Now Fenster is in the seat. He sweats profusely.

FENSTER

I don't know about any truck. I was in Connecticut all night on Friday. I want to call my lawyer.

VOICE (O.S.)

That's not what McManus said.

VERBAL (V.O.)

Fenster always worked with McManus. He was a real tight-ass, but when it came to the job, he was right on. Smart guy. A

VERBAL (cont'd)
gopher. Got whatever you needed for next to nothing.

FENSTER
You guys got nothing on me. Where's your probable cause?

VOICE (O.S.)
You're a known hijacker. You're sweating like a guilty motherfucker. That's my p.c. Save us the time. Tell us where the truck is.

Fenster knocks on the table.

FENSTER
HELLO? Can you hear me in the back? P.C.

He looks under his chair.

FENSTER (CONT'D)
Where is it? I'm lookin'. It's not happening. What's going on with that? I want -

15 INT. INTERROGATION ROOM

15

Hockney's turn in the chair. He laughs it all off.

HOCKNEY
- my lawyer. I'll have your badge, cocksucker.

VERBAL (V.O.)
Hockney was just a bad bastard. Pure and simple. Mean as a snake when it mattered.

VOICE (O.S.)
You think so, tough guy? I can put you in Queens the day of the hijacking.

HOCKNEY
I live in Queens. What the fuck is this? You come into my store and lock me up in front of my customers. What the hell is wrong with this country? Are you guys gonna charge me or what?

VOICE (O.S.)
You know what happens if you do another turn in the joint?

HOCKNEY

I'll fuck your father in the shower.
Charge me, dick-head.

16 INT. INTERROGATION ROOM

16

Now Keaton sits in the chair, cool and indifferent.

VERBAL (V.O.)

Keaton was the real prize for them, for
obvious reasons.

VOICE (O.S.)

I'll charge you when I'm ready.

KEATON

With what?

VOICE (O.S.)

You know damn well, dead-man.

KEATON

Hey, that was your mistake, not mine. Did
you ever think to ask me? I've been
walking around with the same face, same
name - I'm a businessman, fellas.

VOICE (O.S.)

What's that? The restaurant business? Not
anymore. From now on you're in the
getting-fucked-by-us business. I'm gonna
make you famous, cocksucker.

Keaton shows just a flicker of contempt. The threat has hit
home.

KEATON

Like I said. It was all your mistake.
Charge me with it and I'll beat it. Let's
get back to the truck.

A FIST flies into the frame and connects with Keaton's jaw.
His head snaps back, blood flowing freely from his mouth.

17 INT. CELL BLOCK

17

The iron door slams, locking Keaton in. He sits on the edge
of the steel bed on the wall. His shirt is torn and stained
with blood. His face is puffy and bruised. He looks down
through the other four cells beside him.

Hockney, Fenster, McManus and Verbal all look at one another
from their respective cells. They try to smile to Keaton.

VERBAL (V.O.)

They sweat us all night. Came up with nothing. People don't think the cops do shit like that, but it happens all the time. And you wonder why we do what we do.

HOCKNEY

Anybody want to screw?

All five men laugh.

18 INT. CELL BLOCK - LATER

18

McMANUS

Somebody should do something. What is this shit - getting hauled in every five minutes?

FENSTER

There's no probable cause.

HOCKNEY

Hazard of the trade, boys.

McMANUS

What fucking trade? Okay, so I did a little time -

FENSTER

A lot of time.

McMANUS

Shut up. So I did some time. Does that mean I get railed every time a truck finds it's way off the planet?

FENSTER

No p.c.

McMANUS

You're fuckin' A right, no P.C. Well screw P.C. No right. No goddamn right. You do some time, they never let you go. Treat me like a criminal, I'll end up a criminal.

HOCKNEY

You are a criminal.

McMANUS

Why you gotta go and do that? I'm trying to make a point.

KEATON

Then make it. Christ, you're making me tired all over.

McManus spins around and looks at Keaton, sitting on the edge of the bed, looking away.

McMANUS

I heard you were dead.

KEATON

You heard right.

HOCKNEY

The word I got is you hung up your spurs, man. What's that all about?

McMANUS

What's this?

HOCKNEY

Rumor has it, Keaton's gone straight - cleaning house. I hear he's tapping Edie Finneran.

FENSTER

Who's that?

HOCKNEY

She's a heavy-weight criminal lawyer from uptown. Big-time connected. She could erase Dillinger's record if she tried. I hear she's Keaton's meal ticket.

(To Keaton)

Is it true?

McMANUS

How about it, Keaton? You a lawyer's wife. What sort of "retainer" you giving her?

Keaton shoots McManus a fiery glare.

FENSTER

I'd say you've gotten on his main and central nerve.

KEATON

Do your friend a favor, Fenster, keep him quiet.

FENSTER

You're clean, Keaton? Say it ain't so. Was it you that hit that truck?

McMANUS

Forget him. It's not important. I was trying to make a point.

KEATON

(Ignoring McManus)

This whole thing was a shakedown.

FENSTER

What makes you say that?

KEATON

How many times have you been in a line-up, Fenster? It's always you and four dummies. The P.D. pays homeless guys ten bucks a head half the time. No way they'd line five felons in the same row. No way. And what the hell is a voice line-up? A public defender could get you off of that.

McMANUS

Can I finish what I was saying?

FENSTER

So why the hell was I hauled in and cavity searched tonight?

KEATON

It was the Feds. A truck load of guns gets snagged, Customs comes down on N.Y.P.D. for some answers - they come up with us. They're grabbing at straws. It's politics - nothing you can do.

FENSTER

I had a guy's fingers in my asshole tonight.

McMANUS

Is it Friday already?

FENSTER

Fuck you. I'll never shit right again. So who did it? Own up.

KEATON

I don't want to know.

McMANUS

Nobody asked you, working-man. Now what I was trying to say -

HOCKNEY

Fuck who did it. What I want to know is,
who's the gimp?

ALL EYES suddenly turn on Verbal. He has been quietly
listening the whole time without uttering a word.

KEATON

He's alright.

HOCKNEY

How do I know that? How about it,
pretzel-man? What's your story?

KEATON

His name is Verbal Kint. I thought you
guys knew him.

McMANUS

Verbal?

VERBAL

Roger really. People say I talk too much.

KEATON

We've met once or twice. Last time was
in...

VERBAL

County. I was in for fraud.

KEATON

You were waiting for a line-up then, too.
What happened with that?

VERBAL

I walked. Ninety days, suspended.

HOCKNEY

So you did it?

VERBAL

To your mother's ass.

Verbal looks away from Hockney, awaiting a violent response.
Everyone slowly starts to laugh. Hockney looks as if he is
about to boil in his own skin.

KEATON

(To Hockney)

Let it go.

Verbal smiles at Keaton appreciatively.

McMANUS

AS I WAS SAYING. We've all been put out by this, I figure we owe it to ourselves to salvage a little dignity. Now Fenster and I got wind of a possible job -

KEATON

Why don't you just calm down?

HOCKNEY

What do you care what he says?

McMANUS

Yeah, I'm just talking here, and Hockney seems to want to hear me out. I know Fenster is with me -

(To Verbal)

How about you, guy?

VERBAL

I'm interested, sure.

McMANUS

There, so you see, I'm going to exercise my right to free assembly.

McManus taps the bars of his cell and the others LAUGH.

KEATON

I'm not kidding. Shut your mouth.

McMANUS

You're missing the point.

KEATON

No, you're missing the point. Shut up. I don't want to hear anything you have to say. I don't want to know about your "job". Just don't let me hear you. I want nothing to do with any of you -

(Beat)

I beg your pardon, but all of you can go to hell.

HOCKNEY

Dean Keaton, gone the high road. What is the world coming to?

McMANUS

Forget him then.

(Whispering)

Now I can't talk about this here in any detail, but listen up...

Everyone but Keaton gravitates toward McManus's cell as he begins to speak in low, hushed tones.

VERBAL (V.O.)

What the cops never figured out, and what I know now, was that these men would never break, never lie down, never bend over for anybody... Anybody.

19 EXT. PIER - DAY - SAN PEDRO - PRESENT DAY

19

It is morning in the aftermath of the opening scene.

Harsh sunlight shines on the mass of dead bodies on the dock; many of them burned beyond recognition.

Police swarm everywhere, photographers are taking pictures of the scene while a team of men in rolled up sleeves and plastic gloves pick at the remains.

Beyond is a large fire truck on the edge of the pier. Two men operate a water cannon, dousing the smoldering remains of a burned-out ships hull in the water.

A gray Chevy sedan pulls up to the scene. Two men in dark suits get out. The first is SPECIAL AGENT JASPER BRIGGS of the F.B.I. He is tall and fit, in his late thirties. His Partner is SPECIAL AGENT JOEL CHEEVER, fortyish - shorter and heavier than Briggs, with thinning hair.

A UNIFORM COP trots up to them. Briggs holds up his badge.

BRIGGS

Agent Jasper Briggs, this is Agent Joel Cheever, F.B.I. How many dead?

COP

Fifteen so far. We're still pulling some bodies out of the water.

BRIGGS

I don't want any of the bodies moved until we've had a chance to go over this, understood?

COP

I have to clear the scene. I've got word direct from the Chief -

Briggs lights a cigarette, only half listening.

BRIGGS

(Unimpressed)

Yes, yes. Spooky stuff. Any survivors?

COP

Two. There's a guy in L.A. county hospital, but he's in a coma. The D.A. has the other guy - A cripple - from New York I think. Listen, the Chief said -

BRIGGS

Let's get to it.

Briggs and Cheever walk away from the cop, ignoring him completely. They wander through the carnage on the pier.

20 EXT. OCEAN

20

A half mile out from the pier.

The sea is choppy, stirred by the wind. An object floats into view a few feet away, bobbing in the water.

It is A DEAD BODY - a man, face down, wearing a CHECKERED BATHROBE. He drifts quietly toward the open ocean.

21 INT. HEARING ROOM - DAY - LOS ANGELES - PRESENT

21

Verbal Kint sits in a chair in front of a microphone, his brow beaded with sweat.

On the wall behind him is the seal of the STATE OF CALIFORNIA.

He is cleaner, better kept, in a well-cut suit and neatly trimmed hair. He looks older than he did in New York - worn down.

A flurry of voices banter off screen. Verbal's eyes follow the voices back and forth.

VOICE #1 (O.S.)

My client offers his full cooperation in these proceedings. In exchange, his testimony is to be sealed and all matters incriminating to himself are to be rendered inadmissible.

VOICE #2 (O.S.)

The district attorney's office will comply provided -

VOICE #1
No provisions. Nothing. My client's testimony for his immunity.

VOICE #2
May I be frank, Counselor? I suspect the political power behind your client as much as I respect it. I don't know why Mr. Kint has so many faceless allies in City Hall, and I don't care. The embarrassment he helped cause the city of New York will not happen here.

VOICE #1
Immunity.

VOICE#2
Counselor, I will prosecute your client.

VOICE #1
Then prosecute. I will be very impressed to see the District Attorney manage to bring in twenty-seven simultaneous counts of murder against one man with cerebral palsy. I would think a man with your job would agree with these alleged "faceless people in City Hall" you mention.

VOICE #2
One would think counsel is veiling a threat.

VOICE #1
Counsel isn't veiling anything.

VOICE #2
I'll take my chances then. I'll feel safer without a job if a man like Mr. Kint is behind bars.

VOICE #1
Mr. Kint will plead guilty to weapons possession.

VOICE#2
You're joking.

VOICE#1
Weapons. Misdemeanor one.

VOICE#2
Counselor, you're insulting me.

VOICE#1

Counselor, you're bluffing. Shall I push
for misdemeanor two?

Voices mumble off screen. Verbal fidgets in his chair.

VOICE #2

Misdemeanor one. Fine. This is ludicrous.

A tiny smile and a genuine look of disbelief flash across
Verbal's face.

VOICE #2 (CONT'D)

(Clearing throat)

As for the rest of the charges grand
larceny, arson... murder - the district
attorney will accept the subject's
testimony in connection with the above
mentioned events and in exchange will
offer complete immunity. The
transcript... The transcript of said
testimony will be sealed and all matters
incriminating to Mr. Kint will be
rendered inadmissible.

Verbal lets out a long-held sigh of relief.

-- 22 INT. OFFICE - DAY - LOS ANGELES - PRESENT

22

Special Agent David Kujan sits in a cheaply upholstered chair
next to SERGEANT JEFFREY RABIN, a stocky man in his thirties
with built-in angry features. The two men sit across from
CAPTAIN ANTHONY LEO, fifty, gray-haired. Angrier looking than
Rabin and with good reason.

LEO

This was never my problem. Why is this
suddenly my problem?

KUJAN

The Customs office would appreciate your
cooperation.

LEO

(To Rabin)

He keeps saying that.

(To Kujan)

KUJAN

I need some time with him.

LEO

You can't have it. I have the Governor -
I'll say that again The Governor of the

LEO (cont'd)

State of California telling the Mayor telling the chief telling me that he wants no part of this. Internal affairs is probing my colon every fifteen minutes to assure this guy gets due process. That little cripple in there is so politically wired up right now, I couldn't arrest him if he shot me in the ass.

KUJAN

Doesn't that seem a little -

LEO

The answer is no.

KUJAN

Twenty-seven dead bodies in the harbor, ninety-one million dollars in cash, two drug mobs and four hijackers from New York - dead.

LEO

Hail God's wrath. Go back to New York, Agent Kujan.

KUJAN

If it was a dope deal, where is the dope?
If it was a hit, who called it in?

Leo seems to cave in a bit to Kujan's logic.

LEO

What is your theory?

KUJAN

Dean Keaton was the mind behind all of this.

LEO

The dead cop?

KUJAN

The ex-cop, yes. He was a schemer. If anyone knows where the dope is it's him. He was bounced off the force in the seventies on a bribery charge and took up hijacking and smuggling. Customs has been building a case on him for three years.

RABIN

Yeah?

KUJAN

Before he was arrested in New York, we were led to believe Keaton was dead. Killed in a warehouse fire in New Jersey.

RABIN

Okay?

KUJAN

Now I have a professional con-man and habitual liar telling the district attorney that he saw Keaton die on a boat in the harbor moments before his body was burned in a fire. Am I getting through?

RABIN

You're asking us to believe -

KUJAN

That some or all of that mess in the harbor was the work of Dean Keaton and that he is still alive.

RABIN

(Skeptical)

Come on.

LEO

Really, Agent Kujan. It is a bit hokey. What about the Argentines? Could the boat have been a decoy?

KUJAN

Begging the Captain's pardon, but if there's anything I've learned as a cop, it's always the obvious solution. Nothing is that complicated in the real world.

LEO

(To Rabin - Sarcastic)

I, of course, have yet to sample this "real world."

KUJAN

No offense.

LEO

Taken. My hands are tied. He has total immunity and his story checks out. He doesn't know what you want to know.

KUJAN

I don't think he does. Not exactly, but I think there's a lot more to Verbal Kint's

KUJAN (cont'd)

story. The truth may be that he doesn't know there's more. I need time to talk to him and feel it out. I want to know why twenty-seven men died on that pier for what looks to be ninety-one million dollars worth of dope that wasn't there. Above all, I want to be sure that Dean Keaton is dead.

LEO

The Mayor doesn't care, Kujan.

KUJAN

But he does care about the embarrassment in New York.

LEO

Absolutely.

KUJAN

How embarrassed will this city be when I get to the bottom of this myself? I will, and you know it. How will the Mayor explain how someone in this city is moving four and a half tons of cocaine that vanished from under two dozen dead bodies that no one looked into? I'll see that he's made to try. You have my word on that.

Leo looks at Rabin who has been silent all this time. Rabin shrugs indifferently. Leo looks back at Kujan.

LEO

I know you get what you want, Kujan. I've heard all about the trouble you've caused, and I know you won't hesitate to do it to me. As a cop yourself, I'm sure you can understand how little of the academy truly applies, but a long way back in the mists of time I seem to recall someone mentioning something about the law, so I'll let you talk to him and find out what you can. The cripple makes bail in two hours, and when he posts, he's out of my hair.

KUJAN

(Pointing to Rabin)

I need his office.

RABIN

Now hold on.

LEO
You're determined to push me.

KUJAN
Rabin here says he won't talk in an
interrogation room. He's convinced
they're all wired.

LEO
I can't believe this guy.

KUJAN
Thank you.

LEO
(To Rabin)
Go with him.
(To Kujan)
And if you interfere with his due
process, I'll see to it you squat hard on
the business end of a federal indictment.

23 INT. HALLWAY

23

Kujan and Rabin are walking quickly down the hall.

KUJAN
I need a wire.

RABIN
You're amazing. No.

KUJAN
I need your help here. Verbal is a liar,
and what's worse he has diarrhea of the
mouth. I'm going to need you to cross
check everything that he says. I don't
have time to filter his bullshit.

RABIN
Fuck you.

KUJAN
No, fuck you. Politics has mired my ass
since I walked through the front door of
this building. As far as I'm concerned,
you're part of the problem. I will get
what I want from this case if I have to
charge the house of representatives with
obstruction to do it.

RABIN
They warned us about you. Disruptive,
unethical, impractical.

KUJAN

And?

RABIN

And a string of convictions a mile long.

KUJAN

Ninety-one million in cash -

RABIN

I know, I know. Twenty-seven dead things
and the whole thing with the thing. Sure.

KUJAN

So you'll help?

RABIN

It stops when I say. I'm serious.

KUJAN

I see. You're busting my balls. We'll be
friends, I suppose.

RABIN

I most sincerely hope so. Contact or
cover?

KUJAN

What?

RABIN

Inside. Contact or cover?

KUJAN

You have any questions for him?

RABIN

The recipe for ice.

KUJAN

Thank you, Sgt. Cavalcade-of-Laughter.
I'll take contact.

24 INT. HOSPITAL - DAY

24

A door marked INTENSIVE CARE.

The door BURSTS OPEN. SUDDENLY, the hallway is a flurry of
activity.

DOCTOR LISA PLUMBER, age fifty, walks quickly beside Jasper
Briggs.

Briggs walks with all of the determination of a battalion of Chinese infantry.

DOCTOR ALAN SACCOME, a young intern in his late twenties rushes up to them.

PLUMBER

Alan this is Special Agent Jasper Briggs from the F.B.I. Agent Briggs, this is Doctor Alan Sacccone.

ALAN

Nice to meet you.

BRIGGS

Is he talking?

ALAN

He regained consciousness less than an hour ago. He spoke - not English - then he lapsed.

BRIGGS

Hungarian?

ALAN

I don't -

BRIGGS

It was Hungarian. Most of them were Hungarians. Any Hungarians from the old country on staff?

ALAN

We have a Turkish audiologist.

Alan opens a door and Briggs barrels through.

25 INT. HOSPITAL ROOM - I.C.U.

25

Briggs comes to an abrupt halt at the foot of a bed surrounded by a massive tangle of medical equipment. In the center of it all is the as yet unnamed ARKOSH KOVASH, mid-thirties. His body is nearly mummified in bandages and plaster from waist to chin. One leg is badly burned and undressed except for some sort of jell smeared from mid-thigh to the ankle.

BRIGGS

Will he die?

PLUMBER

There's a chance. He's been shot four times in the stomach, he has burns over

PLUMBER (cont'd)
thirty percent of his body. There's still
a bullet lodged in his back.

Briggs walks over to Kovash and kneels down on the bed beside him.

He looks closely at his battered and scalded face. He listens to him for a moment. Kovash goes on incessantly.

Briggs pulls a cellular phone out of his jacket and dials.

BRIGGS
Call hospital security and put a man on
the door until the police get here.

Alan looks at Plumber.

BRIGGS (CONT'D)
Move, I'm not kidding.

Alan runs out of the room. Kovash babbles louder and louder, trying to get Briggs' attention. Briggs sticks a finger in one ear to block him out and hear the phone.

PLUMBER
Is he dangerous?

BRIGGS
Yes.

Someone picks up on the other end of the phone.

BRIGGS (CONT'D)
Joel, it's Briggs. I'm down at L.A.
county. The guy they pulled out of the
harbor is Arkosh Kovash... Yes, I'm
sure... No, he's all fucked up... What? I
can't hear you.

(To Arkosh)
Shut up, Hugo, I'm on the phone.
(Into Phone)
Yes... No... Not until I put someone on
him. Listen, I need you to send me
someone who can speak Hungarian. He's
awake and talking like a Thai hooker...
How should I know? Get me someone who can
talk to him -

Briggs is suddenly distracted by something Kovash has said. In the middle of a long string of unintelligible dialect, he has spouted two words that have gotten Briggs' attention.

He turns and looks down at the tattered man in the bed. Kovash realizes Briggs is listening and says the two words again.

KOVASH

Keyser - Sume.

BRIGGS

What?

He waves his hand, gesturing for Kovash to say it again.

KOVASH

Keyser - Sume.

BRIGGS

No shit?

(Into Phone)

Joel, call Dan Metzheiser over at Justice
and find Dave Kujan from Customs.

26 INT. WORKSHOP - DAY

26

Kujan stands over a workbench behind LOUIS GRISHAM, a thin, rumpled man in his thirties. Louis fiddles with an array of wires and recording devices. Rabin stands a few feet away draining a mug of coffee.

LOUIS

How much time do I have?

KUJAN

Three minutes.

LOUIS

No way. I need a half hour.

RABIN

Stuff a mic in his pants.

LOUIS

If I don't wire him right it could show,
or malfunction. If the mic isn't right,
all you'll hear is his clothes rubbing
against it.

KUJAN

Do you have a small wireless?

Louis holds up a mic the size of a cigarette lighter. Kujan snatches it with one hand and grabs Rabin's coffee cup with the other in mid-sip.

Kujan tucks the mic in his palm, holding it in place with his ring and little fingers. He holds the mug with his index and middle fingers. The mic is buried behind the mug in the hollow of his hand. He holds it up to Rabin and Louis. They nod approvingly.

INT. RABIN'S OFFICE - LATER

Rabin's office can only be described as a disaster area. The desk is cluttered with weeks, perhaps months or even years of paperwork that could never conceivably be sorted out.

Above his desk is a bulletin board. It is a breathtaking catastrophe of papers, wanted posters, rap-sheets, memos and post-its. This is in the neighborhood of decades. Rabin is a man with a system so cryptic, so far beyond the comprehension of others, he himself is most likely baffled by it.

Kujan walks in holding the mug of coffee in one hand. In the other is a THICK STACK OF PAPER. He drops it on the table.

RABIN

Verbal, this is Agent Kujan from Customs.

VERBAL

Nice to meet you.

RABIN

He wants to ask you a few questions before you go.

VERBAL

What about?

KUJAN

About Keaton mostly, but I'd like to start at the line-up back in New York.

This hits a chord. Verbal looks down at the floor.

VERBAL

Can I get a coffee?

KUJAN

In a while. What happened after the line-up?

VERBAL

I'm really thirsty. I used to dehydrate as a kid. One time it was so bad, my piss come out like snot. I'm not kidding. It was all thick and -

RABIN

Alright. I'll get you a fucking coffee.

Rabin walks out of the office, slamming the door behind him.

VERBAL

That guy is tense. Tension is a killer. I used to be in a barber shop quartet in Skokie, Illinois - the baritone was this guy named Kip Diskin. Big fat guy. I mean like Orca fat. He used to get so stressed in the -

KUJAN

(Exasperated)

Verbal, you know we're trying to help you.

VERBAL

Sure. And I appreciate that. And I want to help you, Agent Kujan. I like cops. I would have liked to have been a Fed myself but my C.P. was -

KUJAN

Verbal, I know you know something. I know you're not telling us everything.

VERBAL

I told the D.A. everything I know.

28 INT. WORKSHOP

28

Rabin stands over Louis at his workbench. He adjusts several dials on a receiver until the voices of Kujan and Verbal come clearly through a tinny speaker on the wall. Rabin reaches over for a nearby pot of coffee.

KUJAN (VOICE)

I know you liked Keaton. I know you think he was a good man.

VERBAL (VOICE)

I know he was good.

KUJAN (VOICE)

He was a corrupt cop, Verbal.

29 INT. RABIN'S OFFICE

29

VERBAL

Sure. Fifteen years ago, but he was a good thief. Anyway, the cops wouldn't let him go legit.

KUJAN

Keaton was a piece of shit.

VERBAL

You trying to get a rise out of me?

KUJAN

I want to hear your story.

VERBAL

It's right here.

He taps a finger on the stack of paper that Kujan brought in. Kujan picks it up and thumbs through it.

KUJAN

According to your statement you are a short-con operator. Run of the mill scams. You're a text-book sheister. Everything you do, you learned from somebody else.

VERBAL

That's been suppressed. Anything in there is inadmissible.

KUJAN

Oh, I know. Hell of a lawyer you have. Expensive?

VERBAL

I'm so loaded.

(Laughs)

I love this. I pulled down about a half-mil with those guys. It's all in there. Along with a few guys I popped - New York's finest Taxi service - I threw in jobs I did over the last ten years to firm up the deal. What the hell? They might as well have never happened.

KUJAN

Sweet deal. Total immunity.

VERBAL

Well I do have the weapons charge. I'm looking at six whole months hard time.

KUJAN

You know a dealer named Ruby Deemer, Verbal?

VERBAL

You know a religious guy named John Paul?

KUJAN

You know Ruby is in Attica?

VERBAL

He didn't have my lawyer.

KUJAN

I know Ruby. I helped put him away. He's very big on respect. Likes me very much. His people stop by my house sometimes to send me his best.

Verbal sees this getting to something. His smiles fades.

KUJAN (CONT'D)

Now I know your testimony was sealed. Ruby is well connected. He still has people running errands for him. What do you think he'd say if he found out you dropped his name to the D.A?

VERBAL

There's nothing in there about Ruby.

KUJAN

I'll be sure to mention that to him.

Verbal is not smiling anymore. He stares at Kujan with utter contempt, knowing he is being shafted.

KUJAN (CONT'D)

The first thing I learned on the job, know what it was? How to spot a murderer. Let's say you arrest three guys for the same killing. Put them all in jail overnight. The next morning, whoever is sleeping is your man. If you're guilty, you know you're caught, you get some rest - let your guard down, you follow?

VERBAL

No.

KUJAN

I'll get right to the point. I'm smarter than you. I'll find out what I want to know and I'll get it from you whether you like it or not.

VERBAL

I'm not a rat.

Kujan puts his hand on the transcript of Verbal's confession. Rabin walks in with a cup of coffee. Verbal takes it with his good hand and sips it with a relish.

VERBAL (CONT'D)

Ahhh. Back when I was picking beans in Guatemala we used to make fresh coffee. Right off the trees I mean. That was good. This is shit, but hey...

RABIN

Can we get started again?

KUJAN

Now what happened after the line-up?

Verbal sneers at Kujan, unable to change the subject.

30 EXT. POLICE STATION - NIGHT - NEW YORK - SIX WEEKS PRIOR

30

Keaton stops at the top of the front steps of the police station and lights a cigarette. Edie comes out behind him, fuming mad.

EDIE

...and the desk Sergeant is actually trying to tell me he can't release you? Can you believe that? You weren't even charged. New York police - Jesus. I want to take pictures of your face to bring to the D.A. first thing in the morning.

KEATON

Just forget about it.

He looks across the street and sees Fenster and McManus talking by a newsstand. McManus is thumbing through magazines.

EDIE

Absolutely not.

Keaton looks to his right and sees Hockney trying to hail a cab.

EDIE (CONT'D)

I'll have this thing in front of a grand jury by Monday.

KEATON

Edie, please. I don't want to hear this right now. What did Summers and Yule say?

EDIE

They want more time to think about investing.

KEATON

Goddammit.

EDIE

They just said they wanted time.

KEATON

Time for what, Edie? Time to look into me a little more, that's what. No matter how well you cover my tracks now, they'll find out who I am.

EDIE

Give me some credit. I got you this far, let's go to the grand jury. This is never going to stop if we -

KEATON

No. It's never going to stop, period. It won't take more than a week before every investor in this city is walking away from me. It's finished. I'm finished.

Just then, Verbal bumps into him on his way out the door. He excuses himself and hobbles down the steps, oblivious to who he has bumped into as he tries to navigate the stairs.

EDIE

Don't give up on me now, Dean.

KEATON

They'll never stop.

EDIE

I love you.

KEATON

(To himself)

They ruined me tonight.

EDIE

Dean, I love you. Do you hear me?

Verbal gets to the sidewalk and stops. He turns, realizing it is Keaton on the steps.

EDIE (CONT'D)

Let's just go to my place. We'll worry about this tomorrow.

Keaton and Verbal look at one another for a moment. Keaton then looks over to the newsstand and sees Fenster looking at him.

KEATON

Huh?

Fenster taps McManus who stops babbling and looks up from his magazine to see what Fenster is looking at.

EDIE

Come home with me, please. Dean?

Keaton looks at Hockney who has one foot in a cab. He is looking at Fenster and McManus who are looking at Keaton. This makes Hockney look up at Keaton as well.

SUDDENLY, Edie tunes in to what is going on. She notices the others on the street. She reaches over and takes Keaton by the arm, pulling gently. She glares at the others.

EDIE

Come home, Dean.

KEATON

(Distant)

Alright.

Verbal looks at everyone else from where he stands on the street. Fenster, McManus and Hockney all look at him and then at each other. It is a strange moment of unspoken understanding.

All eyes finally turn to Keaton, high on the front steps of the police station as he walks away with Edie.

31 INT. HALLWAY - DAY

31

Verbal stands in front of an apartment door. He hesitates for a long moment before he knocks.

After a moment, the door opens and Keaton stands on the other side of it. He is wearing a bathrobe and smoking a cigarette.

He looks at Verbal without any expression whatsoever.

KEATON

What are you doing here? How did you find me?

VERBAL

I just asked one of the detectives downtown. He seemed pretty happy to tell me.

Keaton curses under his breath and motions for Verbal to come in.

32 INT. EDIE'S APARTMENT

32

Verbal walks in and sits down on the couch, watching Keaton cautiously. He looks around the large apartment, beautifully furnished and decorated.

Edie walks into the room in a man's button-down shirt and sweat pants.

EDIE

Dean, who was at the -

She stops when she sees Verbal. Verbal stands and smiles nervously.

VERBAL

How do you do?

KEATON

Verb - Roger, this is Edie Finneran.
Edie, this is Roger Kint, he was at -

EDIE

(Cold)

I know who he is.

VERBAL

I hope I didn't disturb you.

EDIE

I hope so, too, Mr. Kint. Can I get you something to drink?

VERBAL

A glass of water would be nice.

Edie shoots a look at Keaton on her way out of the room. Keaton tries to hush his voice despite his anger.

KEATON

What the hell do you want?

VERBAL

I wanted to talk to you. The other guys -

KEATON

I did you a favor by standing up for you last night, but don't think we're friends. I'm sorry, but I have other things -

VERBAL

They're gonna do a job. Three million dollars, maybe more.

Keaton is speechless. Verbal sits on the couch again.

VERBAL

They sent me to offer you a cut. We could use a fifth man - a driver - That's all you'll do.

Edie walks in with a glass of ice water and hands it to Verbal.

VERBAL

Thank you.

Verbal drinks slowly. Edie stands over him, her face blank. It is an awkward moment. She deliberately makes Verbal uncomfortable.

LONG PAUSE - FINALLY:

EDIE

So what is it you do, Mr. Kint?

VERBAL

Umm...

EDIE

A hijacker like Dean, here? Or something more creative?

KEATON

That's enough, Edie.

EDIE

(Angry)

I don't know what you came here for, but we won't have any part of it.

KEATON

Edie, please.

Keaton takes Edie by the arm and tries to guide her toward the other room. She pulls away, anger turning to rage.

EDIE

I've spent the last year of my life putting his back together again - I won't have you come in here and - What makes you think - GET OUT. GET OUT OF MY HOME. HOW DARE YOU COME HERE?

Keaton is pulling her now. She yanks her arm away and shoves him.

EDIE

Don't touch me. Just don't.

She turns and walks out of the room. Somewhere in the back of the apartment, a door slams.

Keaton turns and glares at Verbal. Verbal cringes.

KEATON

Get out.

VERBAL

If you'll just let me -

SUDDENLY, KEATON LUNGES. He grabs Verbal by the lapels and lifts him off the couch, moving him effortlessly across the room and slamming him into the wall next to the front door. He opens it.

VERBAL (CONT'D)

Don't hurt me.

KEATON

(Seething)

Hurt you, you sonofabitch? I could kill you.

Keaton starts to shove Verbal out the door.

VERBAL

(Quickly)

They're going to hit the Taxi Service.

Keaton freezes. LONG PAUSE.

VERBAL

New York's Finest Taxi Service.

KEATON

They - That's bullshit. They don't operate anymore.

VERBAL

McManus has a friend in the thirteenth precinct. They're coming out for one job. Friday night. They're picking up a guy smuggling emeralds out of South America. Fenster and McManus have a fence set to take the stuff.

KEATON

What fence? Who?

VERBAL

Some guy in California. His name is Redfoot.

KEATON

Never heard of him.

Keaton moves to throw Verbal out. Verbal grabs Keaton and holds tight.

VERBAL

You have to come.

KEATON

What's with you? What do you care whether I come or not?

VERBAL

They - They don't know me. You do. They won't take me unless you go. Look at me. I need this.

KEATON

Tough break.

VERBAL

Don't tell me you don't need this. Is this your place?

Keaton is unable to answer.

VERBAL (CONT'D)

They're never going to stop with us, you know that. You can't go legit anymore than I can. After a certain point, they make you a criminal. This way we hit the cops where it hurts and get well in the mean time.

Keaton lets Verbal go and steps back, thinking.

VERBAL (CONT'D)

As clean as you could ever get, they'll never let you go now.

KEATON

I don't do that anymore.

VERBAL

I've heard about you, Keaton. You can't be good and stay true to yourself. It's in your blood, same as the rest of us. I'm not knocking you. You look like you've got a good little scam going with this lawyer -

WHAM. Keaton punches Verbal in the stomach and drops him to one knee. Verbal coughs and tries to find his breath.

KEATON
You watch your mouth.

VERBAL
(Gasping)
Okay, okay. You say it's the real thing?
That's cool.

Keaton reaches for Verbal. Verbal flinches. Keaton gently helps him up and guides him to the couch. They both sit.

Keaton reaches for a pack of cigarettes and lights one for each of them.

KEATON
I apologize.

Verbal takes one and has a few drags, catching his breath and rubbing his stomach in pain.

FINALLY:

VERBAL
I was out of line.

KEATON
You okay?

VERBAL
I'll be alright.

KEATON
Well, I'm sorry.

VERBAL
Forget it.
(Beat)
I'll probably shit blood tonight.

Keaton laughs. Verbal thinks about it for a moment and laughs with him.

Keaton's laughter trails off. He thinks for a moment.

KEATON
How are they going to do it?

VERBAL
McManus wants to go in shooting. I said no way.

KEATON
Fenster and Hockney?

VERBAL
They're pretty pissed off. They'll do anything. Now I got a way to do it without killing anyone, but like I said, they won't let me in without you.

KEATON
Three million?

VERBAL
Maybe more.

KEATON
No killing?

VERBAL
Not if we do it my way.

LONG PAUSE

KEATON
(Lost in thought)
I swore I'd live above myself.

Verbal smiles, knowing he has him.

33 EXT. KENNEDY AIRPORT - DAY

33

VERBAL (V.O.)
New York's finest Taxi Service was not your normal taxi service. It was a ring of corrupt cops in the N.Y.P.D. that ran a high-profit racket, driving smugglers and drug dealers all over the city. For a few hundred dollars a mile, you got your own black and white and a police escort. They even had their own business cards.

OSCAR WHITEHEAD, a tall gray-haired man in his fifties comes out of the international terminal in a white linen suit. He holds a large suitcase in his right hand.

VERBAL (V.O.)
After a while, somebody started asking questions and the taxi service shut down. Ever since then, Internal Affairs had been waiting to catch them in the act.

Oscar stands on the curb long enough to light a cigarette. After a moment, a POLICE CRUISER pulls up to him. He opens the back door and gets in.

VERBAL (V.O.)

And that was how we started. McManus came to us with the job; Fenster got the vans; Hockney supplied the hardware; I came through with how to do it so no one got killed - but Keaton - Keaton put on the finishing touch. A little "Fuck you" from the five of us to the N.Y.P.D.

The car drives out of the airport. A GREEN MINIVAN follows at a distance.

34 INT. POLICE CAR

34

SERGEANT BILL STRAUSZ, a meaty, imposing looking man in his forties drives the car. Beside him is a thin, greasy looking PATROLMAN, STEVE RIZZI. They are two drivers for New York's Finest Taxi Service.

RIZZI

How was the flight?

Oscar hands Rizzi a thick envelope.

OSCAR

Will that get me to the Pierre?

Rizzi counts the stack of hundred dollar bills in the envelope.

RIZZI

That'll get you to Cape Cod.

The two men laugh. Strausz watches the road, expressionless.

35 EXT. HIGHWAY

35

The cruiser heads towards the heart of Manhattan.

36 EXT. STREET - LATER

36

The police car makes its way down a wide, abandoned street. A WHITE MINIVAN pulls out behind it and heads the same way.

37 INT. POLICE CAR

37

Strausz looks in the rear-view mirror. The white minivan is flashing his highbeams.

STRAUSZ

What the -

RIZZI
LOOK OUT.

Strausz looks in front of him. A green minivan swerves in front of them from out of nowhere. Strausz slams on the brakes and skids to a halt. The white minivan rams them from behind.

Strausz and Rizzi are stunned for a moment as two more vans screech up on either side of the cruiser, boxing it in with only a few inches between them.

The cruiser is surrounded on all sides.

SUDDENLY, both side windows shatter and SHOTGUN BARRELS come through. They come to rest, one on Strausz's left temple, one on Rizzi's right. RIZZI looks out of the corner of his eye.

He sees the driver of the van next to him holding the shotgun with one hand. A stocking is over the driver's head.

Strausz looks straight ahead. The minivan in front of them is missing a back window. Another man with a stocking on his head aims a sub-machine gun at them from inside.

By the twisted right hand holding the front of the gun, we know it is Verbal.

Strausz and Rizzi raise their hands without being asked.

38 EXT. STREET

38

The driver of the white van gets out with a heavy blanket in one hand and a sledge hammer in the other.

Moving like lightning, he jumps onto the roof of the police car and covers the overhead lights with the blanket.

He stands on the front of the roof and swings the hammer down.

39 INT. POLICE CAR

39

SMASH

The hammer punches three huge holes in the windshield and finally caves it in. Strausz and Rizzi are covered with pebbles of broken glass. Whitehead clutches his bag in the back seat. He trembles in terror.

The man standing on the roof doubles over and sticks a gun in Strausz's face. His face hangs upside down and looks gruesome - covered from the mouth up in a stocking. By the voice, we know it is Mike McManus.

McMANUS
GIVE ME THE SHIT.

STRAUSZ
Give it up.

Oscar hands the suitcase up front and Strausz passes it to McManus.

40 INT. FRONT VAN

40

Through the front windshield of the front van we see Keaton at the wheel. Verbal is behind him leaning out the back window.

Beneath Keaton's stocking mask we see he is trembling and sweating - sickened by what he is doing.

He glances up at the rear-view mirror and looks at the scene outside. He looks down at the floor in shame, shaking his head.

41 INT. POLICE CAR

41

McMANUS
The money.

Strausz looks at Rizzi.

McMANUS (CONT'D)
THE MONEY. LET'S HAVE IT.

Rizzi hands the money through the remains of the windshield.

McManus takes the money and stuffs it in his jacket. He steps back and pulls out a CAN OF SPRAY PAINT. He quickly starts to spray something on the roof of the car.

STRAUSZ
Do you know who I am?

A hand reaches into the driver's side window and rips Strausz's badge off of his shirt.

Strausz dares to turn his head right at the shotgun pointing at him through the window. On the other end is a masked and smiling Todd Hockney.

HOCKNEY
We do now, Jerk-off.

McManus vanishes as quickly as he came, bolting back to his van.

Strausz and the others look straight ahead at the van in front.

Verbal still trains a subgun on them.

RIZZI

Shit.

THE SUB-GUN EXPLODES IN A HAIL OF BULLETS. Everyone in the car screams and flails for cover.

Bullets rip through the hood of the car. Metal pops, paint and glass fly everywhere. The radiator bursts in a geyser of steam.

The four vans peel away and vanish down a side street, revealing what is left of the police car. None of the men in the car are visible.

SLOWLY, Strausz pokes his head up. Rizzi comes up a moment later, then Oscar. The car is destroyed, but they are unhurt.

PAUSE. Oscar VOMITS over the seat, spraying Strausz and Rizzi.

EXT. STREET - LATER

42

The scene is swarming with fresh police cars. Strausz and Rizzi are fielding questions from a dozen other cops.

Photographers are everywhere.

The roof of the cruiser is emblazoned in HUGE, YELLOW SPRAY-PAINTED LETTERS. It reads:

N.Y.'s FINEST TAXI

VERBAL (V.O.)

The Times got a call that night and was on the scene before the cops were. Strausz and Rizzi were indicted three days later. Within a few weeks, fifty more cops went down with them. It was beautiful. Everybody got it right in the ass, from the chief on down.

43

INT. GARAGE - NIGHT

43

Hockney, Fenster, McManus and Verbal are all laughing in a secluded garage. They are still in their black clothes from the robbery. Hockney is throwing everyone a can of beer.

Keaton sits off by himself. He watches the others, unable to join in the festivities.

The others sit around a cheap card table. It is covered with uncut emeralds. Dozens of them. Everyone is in awe.

McMANUS

There's more than I thought.

HOCKNEY

When does the fence come?

McMANUS

Redfoot? He never comes to see me. I have to go see him.

VERBAL

In California?

McMANUS

Yeah. It'll take a few days. Me and Fenster -

HOCKNEY

Hold the fuckin' phone. You and Fenster?
No, no, no.

McMANUS

Guys, come on.

HOCKNEY

I'm sure you can understand my hesitation.

FENSTER

Then who goes?

HOCKNEY

We all go. How about it, Keaton?

All eyes turn to Keaton. He comes out of his trance.

KEATON

We need to lay low for a while.

McMANUS

Fine with me.

PAUSE

Everyone looks at each other, their moment of distrust blowing over. All eyes drift back to the emeralds on the table.

Hockney begins to snicker, then McManus, then Fenster. Verbal joins in at last.

McManus grabs Verbal and hugs him, shaking him violently.

McMANUS (CONT'D)
My boy with the plan.

SUDDENLY, everyone yells and pours beer over Verbal's head. He laughs as he is drenched in white foam, nearly choking as the others chant his name.

Keaton watches from across the room, trying to smile in vain.

44 INT. ELEVATOR - DAY

44

Keaton and Verbal ride up in silence.

VERBAL
We're going to miss the flight.

KEATON
We'll make it.

VERBAL
Don't do this. Send her a letter -
something.

KEATON
We'll make it.

45 EXT. HALLWAY

45

Keaton and Verbal get off the elevator. They come out down the hall from a set of glass doors. A sign on the doors reads: MONTGOMERY and LaGUARDIA - ATTORNEYS AT LAW.

Just inside the doors is a waiting room. Keaton grabs Verbal by the arm and stops him. He nods his head towards the doors.

Verbal looks and sees Edie walking across the waiting room to an old woman reading a magazine. The two women talk for a moment.

Keaton stands behind Verbal as if to hide behind the meek cripple.

He watches Edie help the old woman up and escort her inside the office. Edie is smiling and laughing with the old woman.

Keaton's face is marked with guilt and anguish.

VERBAL
She'll understand.

Verbal turns to Keaton but he is gone. He has gotten back on the elevator. The doors begin to close. Verbal takes one last glance at Edie and turns back to Keaton.

46 INT. OFFICE WAITING ROOM

46

Edie seems to sense something behind her. She turns and looks through the glass doors and out into the hall.

THE HALL IS EMPTY. She goes back to chatting with the old woman.

47 INT. RABIN'S OFFICE - DAY - LOS ANGELES - PRESENT

47

KUJAN

Heartwarming. Really, I feel weepy.

VERBAL

You wanted to know what happened after the line-up, I'm telling you.

KUJAN

Oh come on, Verbal. Who do you think you're talking to? You really expect me to believe he retired? For a woman? Bullshit. He was using her.

VERBAL

He loved her.

KUJAN

Sure. And I'm supposed to believe that hitting the Taxi Service wasn't his idea either.

VERBAL

That was all Fenster and McManus.

KUJAN

Come on. Keaton was a cop for four years. Who else would know the Taxi Service better? That job had his name all over it.

VERBAL

Sure he knew, but Edie had him all turned around. I'm telling you straight, I swear.

48 INT. WORKSHOP

48

Rabin is listening to the conversation with Louis.

SUDDENLY, The DOOR BURSTS OPEN. Captain Leo stands in the hall.

LEO
WHAT THE HELL IS GOING ON HERE, RABIN?

Rabin turns without flinching and motions for him to be quiet.

LEO
This kind of shit is cleared with me. I want it shut down right now.

RABIN
Listen.

LEO
TO WHAT? YOU LISTEN TO ME.

RABIN
Cap, just listen for two minutes.

49 INT. RABIN'S OFFICE

49

VERBAL
You keep trying to lay this whole ride on Keaton. It wasn't like that.

KUJAN
Let me tell you something. I know Dean Keaton. I've been investigating him for three years. The guy I know is a cold-blooded bastard. I.A.D. indicted him on three counts of murder before he was kicked off the force, so don't sell me the hooker with the heart of gold.

VERBAL
You got him wrong.

KUJAN
Do I? Keaton was under indictment a total of seven times when he was on the force. In every case, witnesses either reversed their testimony to the grand jury or died before they could testify. When they finally did nail him for fraud, he spent five years in Sing Sing. He killed three prisoners inside - one with a knife in the tailbone while he strangled him to death. Of course I can't prove this but I can't prove the best part either.

Kujan pauses to drink some coffee.

KUJAN (CONT'D)

Dean Keaton was dead. Did you know that? He died in a fire two years ago during an investigation into the murder of a witness who was going to testify against him. Two people saw Keaton enter a warehouse he owned just before it went up. They said he had gone in to check a leaking gas main. It blew up and took all of Dean Keaton with it. Within three months of the explosion, the two witnesses were dead, one killed himself in his car and the other fell down an open elevator shaft.

50 INT. WORKSHOP

50

Captain Leo and Rabin look at one another as they listen.

KUJAN (On Speaker)

Six weeks ago I get an anonymous call telling me I can find Keaton eating at La Lanturna with his lawyer, and there he is. Now because he never profited from his alleged death and because someone else was convicted for the murder we tried to pin on Keaton, we had to let him go.

51 INT. RABIN'S OFFICE

51

KUJAN (CONT'D)

He was dead just long enough for a murder rap to blow over, then he had lunch.

VERBAL

I don't know about that.

KUJAN

I don't think you do. But you say you saw Keaton die. I think you're covering his ass and he's still out there somewhere. I think he was behind that whole circus in the harbor. My bet is he's using you because you're stupid and you think he's your friend. You tell me he's dead, so be it. I want to make sure he's dead before I go back to New York.

VERBAL

(Blurting)

He wasn't behind anything. It was the lawyer.

KUJAN

What lawyer?

PAUSE

KUJAN (CONT'D)

What lawyer, Verbal?

Verbal stammers for a moment, looking around wildly.

VERBAL

Back when I was in that barber shop quartet in Skokie, Illinois I used to have -

Kujan grabs Verbal's shirt and yanks him half out of his seat.

KUJAN

You think I don't know you held out on the D.A? What did you leave out of that testimony? I can be on the phone to Ruby Deemer in ten minutes.

VERBAL

The D.A. gave me immunity.

KUJAN

NOT FROM ME, YOU PIECE OF SHIT. THERE IS NO IMMUNITY FROM ME. You atone with me or the world you live in becomes the hell you fear in the back of your tiny mind. Every criminal I have put in prison, every cop who owes me a favor, every creeping scumbag that works the street for a living, will know the name of Verbal Kint. You'll be the lowest sort of rat, the prince of snitches, the loudest cooing stool pigeon that ever grabbed his ankles for the man. Now you talk to me, or that precious immunity they've seen so fit to grant you won't be worth the paper the contract put out on your life is printed on.

Verbal looks at Kujan with utter contempt.

VERBAL

There was a lawyer. Kobayashi.

KUJAN

Is he the one that killed Keaton?

VERBAL

No. But I'm sure Keaton's dead.

KUJAN

Convince me. Tell me every last detail.

52 INT. WORKSHOP

52

LEO

Start writing.

Rabin grabs a pad and pencil.

53 INT. HOSPITAL - DAY

53

Kovash's room is now filled with people. Jasper Briggs stands next to DANIEL METZHEISER, a balding man in his forties. Next to him is Doctor Plumber. Across from her is Alan Saccone.

Sitting beside the bed is TRACY FITZGERALD, a casually dressed woman in her late twenties. She holds a 15x20 inch drawing pad on her lap.

Police fill the hall. People are talking loudly outside. LIONEL BODI, a cop in his mid-twenties pushes his way in.

BRIGGS

Are you the translator?

BODI

Patrolman Lionel Bodi, sir.

PLUMBER

Agent Briggs, I can't allow any more of this.

BRIGGS

I'll see to it we're gone before he blows his porch light, Doctor.

Briggs gestures to Tracy.

BRIGGS

(To Bodi)

This is Tracy Fitzgerald. She's a composite sketch artist from county.

The young couple smile at one another nervously.

BODI

Hi.

TRACY

Hi.

METZHEISER

(Impatient)

I've got a noon meeting, Briggs.

PLUMBER

Agent Briggs, this is out of hand.

BRIGGS

Everyone calm down.

(To Bodi)

Ask this man about the shoot-out in the harbor.

Bodi speaks in Hungarian to Kovash. Kovash smiles with relief when he hears his own language. Kovash replies spilling over in a stream of Hungarian.

BODI

He says they were buying... It doesn't make sense. I'm sorry, I'm a little rusty. They were there to buy something.

BRIGGS

Dope, we know.

BODI

Not dope. Something else. Some What?.. He doesn't know what they were buying. But not dope... People.

METZHEISER

Your witness is whacked, Briggs.

BODI

He says he'll tell us everything he knows if we protect him.

BRIGGS

Tell him fine.

Bodi relays this. Kovash frantically shakes his head, babbling.

BODI

No good. He needs guarantees. He says... his life is in danger... He has seen the Devil... looked him in the eye.

METZHEISER

I'll be on my way.

Briggs grabs Metzheiser by the arm.

BRIGGS
(To Bodi)

Tell him to tell this man what he was telling me before. Who is the Devil? Who did he see?

Bodi relays the question.

KOVASH
Keyser Sume.

Metzheiser is suddenly interested. Kovash continues.

BODI
He says he saw him in the harbor. He was shooting... Killing... Killing many men.

METZHEISER
Did he say Keyser Sume? He saw Keyser Sume.

KOVASH
Keyser Sume. Keyser Sume.

BODI
He says he knows his face. He sees it when he closes his eyes.

METZHEISER
Ask him what this Devil looks like?

BRIGGS
(To Tracy)
Ready?

Tracy holds up her pad and pencil. She nods.

54 EXT. LOS ANGELES SKYLINE - DAY - FIVE WEEKS PRIOR

54

VERBAL (V.O.)
McManus' fence was this guy named Redfoot. He had a good reputation around L.A. Seemed like a good guy - Looked like a cowhide full of thumbtacks.

55 EXT. PARKING LOT - NIGHT

55

All five guys stand in an empty parking lot. It is utterly quiet.

An old but well kept Cadillac creeps into the lot from the far end and idles up to them. The windows are tinted too much

to see in. The car passes within a few feet of them and drives on.

A moment later, a chrome and leather monster of a Harley Davidson pulls into the lot. The rider is dressed in an almost comical array of leather, silver and suede.

He waves to the Caddy as it parks a few yards from Keaton and the others. It sits quietly, almost menacing.

As he gets closer, we can see he is wearing one black boot and one red. Keaton is still looking at them when the bike pulls up to them and stops.

REDFOOT and McManus shake hands.

REDFOOT
How've you been?

McMANUS
Good. You?

REDFOOT
Alright. How's it going, Fenster?

FENSTER
Getting by.

REDFOOT
You got it?

McManus holds up a briefcase.

Redfoot takes it and gets off the bike. He walks over to the Caddy. The door of the Caddy opens. Redfoot hands the case to someone inside that we cannot see. The door closes.

KEATON
(Whispering)
Snazzy dresser this guy.

A moment later, the door of the Caddy opens again. Someone hands Redfoot a different briefcase and he walks back over to McManus.

He hands him the case.

McManus hands the case back to Hockney. Hockney opens it, revealing the stacks of money inside.

REDFOOT
You must be Keaton.

McMANUS

Jesus, I'm sorry. Redfoot, this is Dean Keaton, that's Todd Hockney, and that's Verbal Kint.

REDFOOT

(To Verbal)

The man with the plan.

Verbal smiles.

REDFOOT (CONT'D)

Are you guys interested in more work?

McManus moves to answer, but Keaton cuts him off.

KEATON

We're on vacation.

REDFOOT

I've got a ton of work and no good people.

McMANUS

What's the job?

Keaton shoots McManus a foul look. McManus pretends not to notice.

REDFOOT

A jeweler out of Texas named Saul. He rents a suite at a hotel downtown and does free appraisals. Buys whatever he can. Word is he moves with a lot of cash. I'll take the merchandise, you keep the green.

HOCKNEY

Security?

REDFOOT

Two bodyguards. Pretty good.

McMANUS

Give me time to check it out?

REDFOOT

I'd expect nothing less.

McMANUS

Tempting. We'll call you.

REDFOOT
Take your time. Enjoy L.A.

KEATON
A friend of mine in New York tells me you knew Spook Hollis.

REDFOOT
I hear you did time with old Spook. Yeah, he was a good egg. I used to run a lot of dope for him. Fuckin' shame he got shivved.

KEATON
I shivved him.

Now McManus is shooting the angry look at Keaton.

KEATON (CONT'D)
Better you hear it from me now than somebody else later.

REDFOOT
Business or personal?

KEATON
A little of both.

REDFOOT
Ain't it a crime? Call if you're interested.

Redfoot fires up his bike and takes off with the Caddy close behind.

McMANUS
(To Keaton)
What's your fucking problem?

KEATON
One job, that was the deal.

McMANUS
Take it as it comes, brother.

KEATON
This is bullshit.

McManus laughs and walks away. Fenster and Hockney follow.

Verbal turns to Keaton.

VERBAL

What is it Keaton?

KEATON

(Distant)

Something - I don't know.

(Shaking himself)

I ever tell you about the restaurant I wanted to open?

Keaton walks off. Verbal follows him in confusion.

VERBAL (V.O.)

L.A. was good for about two hours. We were from New York. There's no place to eat after one; you can't get a pizza that doesn't taste like a fried fruit-bat, and the broads don't want to know you if you don't look like a broad. Within a few days the last of us was ready to go back to N.Y., but Keaton wouldn't have it, so he really didn't have a choice. We went to work.

56 INT. PARKING GARAGE - NIGHT

56

McManus walks along a line of cars. He comes across a black Mercedes and stops. He looks down at the license plate and walks over to the next car, a green Honda. He pulls a slim-jim out of his jacket and pops the lock on the Honda. He reaches in opens the hood. He walks around and sticks his head in the engine.

57 INT. VAN

57

Verbal sits behind the wheel. Keaton is beside him. Hockney and Fenster are in the back. They all watch McManus from where they are parked a few dozen yards away.

58 INT. PARKING GARAGE

58

DING-DING

The elevator bell sounds at the far end of the garage. The doors open. Two men in ill-fitting suits get out and look around cautiously. The first is FRANK TUCCI, a big bellied, white haired menace. The other is JOHN HIGHAM, lean and bad skinned. They are bodyguards and give it away by their every careful move.

They turn back to the elevator and motion to someone inside.

Out walks SAUL BERG, a slightly overweight man in his forties with an open collar silk shirt and a thick gold chain on his hairy chest. He carries a LARGE ALUMINUM BRIEFCASE.

He lets his guards do the worrying. He walks straight to his car.

Saul passes McManus under the hood of the Honda. He takes out his keys and pushes a button on his key chain. The Mercedes beeps three times and tells Saul his alarm is off.

Tucci keeps an eye on McManus. Higham watches Saul.

McManus pretends to tinker with the cars engine. He has put two pistols just inside the grill and keeps them within reach.

The van on the other side of the garage starts and pulls out of the spot. It cruises over toward the Mercedes.

Tucci sees the van. He and Higham are suddenly busy trying to keep track. They hear laughing behind them and turn around.

FENSTER and HOCKNEY are walking towards them. They are sporting mustaches and sunglasses in addition to matching suits, each with loud plaid sport coats, decades out of style. Saul glances at Tucci and Higham.

HIGHAM

Just get in the car Saul.

Under the hood of the Honda and out of sight, McManus pulls on a black ski mask.

The van gets closer.

HOCKNEY

I get out of the car, and man if the thing wasn't wrecked. And I see this broad in the back seat with nothing on.

Saul gets in the car quickly but calmly as Fenster and Hockney laugh and talk louder. They look drunk - The desired effect.

HOCKNEY (CONT'D)

I'm laughing so hard I can't breathe -

Tucci and Higham try to take it all in stride. Saul's reverse lights come on and he begins to back out of the spot.

HOCKNEY (CONT'D)

...And the fat guy comes out of the car with his pants on backwards and says -

BOOM

The van suddenly roars up from behind and rams into Saul's Mercedes. Hockney and Fenster drop the drunk act and snap to. They both pull out guns and start screaming.

HOCKNEY (CONT'D)
DON'T MOVE, YOU FUCKERS.

FENSTER
RIGHT THERE. FREEZE.

Tucci and Higham throw their hands in the air. Hockney and Fenster grab them and reach into their belts to get their guns.

Keaton jumps out of the van and runs up to Saul's car, his face covered in a ski mask. He yanks on the door handle but it is locked. Saul sits in terror behind the wheel. Keaton pulls out a pistol and smashes the window with it.

KEATON
Give me the case.

Saul reaches over for the case. Keaton trains the gun on him.

SUDDENLY, Saul comes up with a pistol and points it at Keaton. Keaton sidesteps and grabs his wrist. The gun goes off into the fender of the Honda.

Hockney and Fenster both look over at the sound of the gun.

Tucci and Higham seize the opportunity. Tucci grabs Hockney, Higham grabs Fenster. The four men grapple for the guns.

McManus steps out from under the hood of the car with a gun in each hand. He trains a pistol on each bodyguard and takes a breath. They are some ten feet apart and moving erratically. Hockney and Fenster constantly fall in the line of fire.

McManus walks around the four men, keeping a pistol trained on each of the guards. Finally he comes to an angle where they are all in front of him. One guard is a few feet away, the other is ten feet past him.

McMANUS' P.O.V.

The closer of the two moves in and out of the sights of the pistol in McManus' right hand, the one farther away does the same with the left.

Verbal jumps out of the van and moves towards them to help.

BOOM

Both of McManus' guns go off like one shot. Tucci and Higham collapse, each with a bullet in his head

PAUSE

The only sound is Saul grappling with Keaton for the gun. His arm is halfway out the window. His elbow rests in the door frame.

Keaton cannot get the gun out of his hand. Finally, he pushes down with all his weight. Saul's elbow breaks backwards on the door frame. He screams in agony. The gun falls from his hand.

All five of the men look at each other for an impossibly long moment. The confusion is only aggravated by Saul's screaming.

SLOWLY, Keaton raises his pistol and aims it at Saul. His hand trembles, his eyes squint to near slits. His finger tenses and slacks off over and over again on the trigger.

BOOM

VERBAL SHOOTS SAUL. Keaton looks at him in surprise. Verbal trembles more than he does.

The garage is silent.

HOCKNEY

What the hell?

McMANUS

Bad day. Fuck it.

DING-DING

The elevator light comes on. All five men look.

KEATON

Move.

Keaton reaches into the car and grabs Saul's case. Everyone else piles into the van. Keaton gets in as Verbal is driving for the exit.

A MAN and a WOMAN come out of the elevator. They talk quietly and walk towards their car. The man notices Honda's hood is up.

MAN

What's that?

WOMAN

Honey?

MAN

I think someone tried to steal the car again. Christ.

He stomps over to the car to check the damage.

His wife sees a hand on the ground just behind the car. She walks around the back and finds the bodies of Tucci and Higham. She stammers, unable to speak.

The man is under the hood of the car. He looks to his left and sees Saul in the next car. His arm hangs out of the window, twisted in an odd direction, a bullet-hole in his ear.

SUDDENLY, the woman finds her voice. She SCREAMS.

59 INT. VAN

59

The mood in the van is grim. Everyone is silent. Keaton pops the clasps on the case and opens it.

KEATON

Son of a bitch.

Everyone looks in the case. It is filled with cash on one side. The other side is filled with clear plastic bags of WHITE POWDER.

60 EXT. PARKING LOT - NIGHT

60

Keaton and the others walk through the empty lot. Redfoot is waiting this time. His bike is parked to one side. He sits on the fender of the dark Caddy. Keaton throws Saul's case on the ground at Redfoot's feet. Redfoot picks it up.

KEATON

What can we expect next, asshole?

REDFOOT

I know you're pissed. I can understand.

KEATON

I came here to kill you.

REDFOOT

Get a grip. I didn't know.

KEATON

You didn't know.

REDFOOT

The job got thrown to me by a lawyer from upstate.

KEATON

Who is he?

REDFOOT

Some slope. He's a middle-man for somebody. He doesn't say and I don't ask.

KEATON

I want to meet him.

REDFOOT

He wants to meet you. He called last night and asked me to set it up. What do I tell him?

KEATON

Tell him we'll meet. If you're lying to me, Redfoot...

REDFOOT

Keaton, you're a real bad-ass, but get off my tip.

Keaton lunges for Redfoot. The Caddy doors instantly pop open and rifle barrels come into view from within. Everyone grabs Keaton and holds him back.

REDFOOT (CONT'D)

Real shame about Saul getting whacked. Lot's of cops looking for the guys that did it. I'm sure they'll get around to asking me.

Redfoot gets on his bike and starts it.

KEATON

Fuck you.

REDFOOT

I'll be in touch. Stay low.

He drives off. The Caddy waits until he is completely out of sight before following.

INT. RABIN'S OFFICE - DAY - PRESENT

61

KUJAN

So this lawyer...

VERBAL

Kobayashi.

KUJAN

Came from Redfoot.

VERBAL

Right.

KUJAN

And why leave this out when you talked to the D.A?

A KNOCK AT THE DOOR

Rabin sticks his head in.

RABIN

Someone to see you, Agent Kujan.

Kujan steps out into the hall, shutting the door behind him.

62 INT. HALLWAY

62

Kujan smiles instantly, recognizing the man standing with Rabin.

KUJAN

Jasper. What are you doing here?

BRIGGS

I've been looking for you all afternoon. You still after the coke that walked out of last week's blood bath in the harbor?

KUJAN

Yeah.

BRIGGS

You can stop looking. There was no coke. I've been in L.A. county with a guy they pulled out of a drainpipe in San Pedro two days after the shoot-out. He came to this morning and started talking. He was part of a Hungarian mob there to do a deal with a bunch of gwats from Argentina. He says it was definitely not a dope deal.

KUJAN

There was ninety-one million -

BRIGGS

We know, but our man says no way on the dope. This Hungarian tells me the whole bunch was pulling stumps for Turkey the next day. They had no time to negotiate that kind of product and no means to move it.

KUJAN

What was the money for?

BRIGGS

He didn't know. No one doing the deal knew except a few key people. This guy says they were real hush about it. Whatever it was it was highly sensitive. The mob's best people were there.

KUJAN

I don't get it.

BRIGGS

They tell me you got the cripple from New York in there. He mention Keyser Sume?

KUJAN

Who?

BRIGGS

Bear with me here.

63 INT. RABIN'S OFFICE - LATER

63

BOOM - The door bursts open.

KUJAN

Who is Keyser Sume?

Verbal looks up in shock. He drops his cigarette and trembles at the mere mention of the name.

VERBAL

Ahhh fuck.

64 INT. HOTEL ROOM - DAY - TWO WEEKS PRIOR

64

Keaton stands while the rest sit and listen.

KEATON

So I need to know if anyone can think of anybody. Somebody with power. Enough to possibly track us from New York.

McMANUS

Look. We've been over it for an hour now. I say we pack up and run. Let's go back to New York. At least get out of L.A.

A KNOCK ON THE DOOR

KEATON

Here we go.

Keaton opens the door.

MR. KOBAYASHI a tall, slim, well groomed Asian stands in the hall. He has a briefcase in his hand. He smiles politely.

KOBAYASHI

Mr. Keaton?

Keaton stands back and lets him in. Kobayashi looks them over.

KOBAYASHI (CONT'D)

I am Mr. Kobayashi. I've been asked by my employer to bring a proposal to you gentlemen. That must be Mr. Hockney. I recognize Mr. Fenster from his mug shot, as well as Mr. McManus.

(To Verbal)

I can only assume that you are Mr. Kint. I believe you were the one who disposed of Saul. My employer sends his gratitude. A most unexpected benefit.

Everyone looks at one another in shock that he would know this.

KEATON

What can we do for you?

KOBAYASHI

My employer requires your services. One job. One day's work. Very dangerous. I don't expect all of you to live, but those who do will have ninety-one million dollars to divide any way they see fit.

KEATON

Who's your boss?

KOBAYASHI

My employer wishes to remain anonymous.

KEATON

Don't jerk me off. We all know what this is. You don't work with me if I work with you without knowing who I'm working for. Now let's cut the shit. Who's the man?

KOBAYASHI

I work for Keyser Sume.

A strange look crosses Keaton's face. Skepticism, mockery and just a hint of fear. Hockney, McManus and Fenster all share similar looks.

KEATON

What is this?

VERBAL

Who's Keyser Sume?

KOBAYASHI

I am sure you've heard a number of tall tales, myths and legends about Mr. Sume. I can assure you gentlemen, most of them are true.

VERBAL

Who's Keyser Sume?

KOBAYASHI

Judging by the sudden change in mood, I am sure the rest of your associates can tell you, Mr. Kint. I have come with an offer directly from Mr. Sume. An order actually.

KEATON

An order.

KOBAYASHI

In nineteen-eighty one, Mr. Keaton, you participated in the hijacking of a truck in Buffalo, New York. The cargo was raw steel. Steel that belonged to Mr. Sume and was destined for Pakistan to be used in a Nuclear reactor. A very profitable violation of U.N. law. You had no way of knowing this, because the man shipping the steel was working for Mr. Sume without his knowledge.

(Beat)

Mr. Fenster and Mr. McManus hijacked a two-prop cargo flight earlier this year out of Newark airport. The plane was carrying platinum and gold wiring. Also set for Pakistan.

Kobayashi turns and points at Hockney.

KOBAYASHI (CONT'D)

Two months ago, Mr. Hockney stole a truck carrying gun parts through Queens -

Everyone looks at Hockney. He smiles shyly. It occurs to them all that he robbed the truck for which they were all arrested in the first place.

KOBAYASHI (CONT'D)

- guns allegedly set to be destroyed by the state of New York. They were to be "lost" in a weigh station and routed to Belfast. Again, Mr. Sume using pawns who had no knowledge.

(turning to Verbal)
Which brings us to Mr. Kint.

Verbal crumbles under his stare.

KOBAYASHI (CONT'D)

Nine months ago, one of Mr. Sume's less than intelligent couriers was taken in a complicated confidence scam by a cripple. He was relieved of sixty-two thousand dollars. Now -

(To all of them)
- It has taken us some time to find you. Our intention was to approach you after your apprehension in New York.

KEATON

You set up the line-up.

KOBAYASHI

Mr. Sume made a few calls, yes. You were not to be released until I came to see you. It seems Mr. Keaton's attorney, Ms. Finneran, was a bit too effective in expediting his release. Holding the rest of you became a moot point.

KEATON

What about Redfoot?

KOBAYASHI

Mr. Redfoot knew nothing. Mr. Sume rarely works with the same people for very long, and they never know who they're working for. One cannot be betrayed if one has no people.

FENSTER
So why tell us?

KOBAYASHI
Because you have stolen from Mr. Sume. That you did not know you stole from him is the only reason you are still alive, but he feels you owe him. You will repay your debt.

HOCKNEY
Who is this guy? How do we know you work for Sume?

KOBAYASHI
I don't think that is relevant, Mr. Hockney. The five of you are responsible for the murder of Saul Berg and his bodyguards. Mr. Redfoot can attest to your involvement, and we can see to it that he will. He is not of your "superior" breed.

McMANUS
This is a load of shit.

KOBAYASHI
The offer is this, gentlemen. Mr. Sume's primary interest, as I am sure you all know, is narcotics. He's been - competing shall we say, with a group of Argentinians for several years. Competing with Mr. Sume has taken its toll. These Argentinians are negotiating the sale of ninety-one million dollars in cocaine in three days time. Needless to say, this purchase will revitalize the diminishing strength of their organization. Mr. Sume wants you to stop the deal. If you choose, you may wait until the buy. Whatever money changes hands is yours. The transaction will take place on a boat in San Pedro. Mr. Sume wants you to take the boat out to sea and sink it with the cocaine on board. When you feel you are safe, you are to inform us of the location of the boat. Then you are free of your obligation to Mr. Sume.

KEATON
Someone else could find the boat?

KOBAYASHI

Then I suggest, Mr. Keaton, you sink it where no one will find it, and inform Mr. Sume quickly.

Kobayashi puts his briefcase on the table in front of him.

KOBAYASHI (CONT'D)

A gift from Mr. Sume, gentlemen.

He turns and walks out of the room.

Keaton walks over to the case and opens it. He reaches in and pulls out five thick manila envelopes, each marked in bold black letters. "KEATON", "McMANUS", "HOCKNEY", "FENSTER" and "KINT".

Keaton hands each man his file. He opens his first. He pulls out a thick stack of papers and thumbs through them.

KEATON

Jesus Christ. Open them.

All of the men open their files. Inside are mug shots of each man in his respective file as well as a printout of his criminal record. But there is more.

HOCKNEY

They know everything.

McMANUS

This is my life in here. Everything I've done since I was eighteen.

FENSTER

Everybody I ever worked with, did time with.

HOCKNEY

They fucking know everything.

Keaton pulls out a large black and white photograph of himself and his lawyer EDIE FINNERAN. They are laughing arm in arm by a fountain in New York. He hides the photo from the others.

KEATON

This is not right.

FENSTER

I don't know. Who was that guy that used to talk about Sume in New York?

McMANUS
Bricks Marlin:

FENSTER
Yeah. He said he did jobs for him.
Indirect stuff. Always five times more
money than the job was worth.

KEATON
Come on. The guy is a pipe dream. This
Kobayashi is using him for window
dressing.

FENSTER
I don't know. This is bad.

HOCKNEY
It's bullshit. This guy could be L.A.P.D.
I think it's a setup.

FENSTER
The way I hear it, Sume is some kind of
butcher. No pity.

KEATON
There is no Keyser Sume.

Verbal thumbs through his file. A long list of names,
numbers, addresses. It is a detailed portfolio of his entire
criminal and personal life. He looks up at Keaton.

VERBAL
Who is Keyser Sume?

65 INT. RABIN'S OFFICE - DAY - PRESENT

65

Kujan leans into Verbal's face. He hangs on his every word.

VERBAL
He is supposed to be Turkish. First
generation, maybe second. Some say his
father was German. All kinds of stories
about him. What he's done, who he's
killed. Nobody believed he was real.
Nobody ever saw him or knew anybody that
ever worked directly for him, but to hear
Kobayashi tell it, anybody could have
worked for Sume. You never knew. That was
his power. The greatest trick the Devil
ever pulled was convincing the world he
didn't exist. One story the guys told me
- the story I believe - was from his days
in Turkey. There was this gang of
Hungarians that wanted into the mob, any

VERBAL (cont'd)

Mob. They tried the Chinks and the Guineas. They even tried the Jews - nothing doing. They realized they had no blood and they would never rise to power in another man's mob, so they made their own. After a while they learned the only trick they had. To be in power you didn't need guns or money or numbers. You just needed the will to do what the other guy wouldn't.

66 INT. TURKISH DELI - DAY

66

WE ARE IN TURKEY, perhaps in the EARLY SEVENTIES. We see the small Hungarian mob destroying the deli, beating up the proprietor and his wife. One of them cuts off the Deli owner's fingers and drops them in the pickle barrel, laughing as he does it.

VERBAL (V.O.)

After a while they come to power, and then they come after Sume. He was small time then, just running dope, they say.

67 INT. SUME'S HOME - DAY

67

Three of the Hungarians come bursting into Keyser Sume's home. They grab his five children and round them up in the front room. One of the men grabs his wife and back-hands her across the face.

VERBAL (V.O.)

They come to his home in the afternoon looking for his business. They find his wife and kids in the house and decide to wait for Sume.

68 INT. SUME'S HOME - LATER

68

The front door opens and in walks Keyser Sume. We are never allowed to see his face.

Sume's wife lies in the corner, beaten and bruised. Her dress is tattered to shreds. She cannot look up at her husband.

The three Hungarians stand to greet him. Two hold guns in their hands. The third holds a straight razor. He grabs Sume's youngest boy and holds the razor to his throat.

VERBAL (V.O.)

He comes home to his wife raped and his children screaming. The Hungarians knew Sume was tough. Not to be trifled with. So they let him know they meant business.

The Hungarian smiles. Sume's wife SCREAMS IN HORROR.

The Hungarian holds up a BLOOD SOAKED RAZOR.

SUDDENLY, he grabs another child. A little girl no older than six.

VERBAL (V.O.)

They tell Sume they want his territory - all his business. Sume looks over the faces of his family... Then he showed these men of will what will really was.

SUDDENLY, Sume pulls out a pistol and shoots the two men with guns. He turns and aims at the third man holding his child.

The man threatens to cut the child's throat, slicing just enough to draw blood.

SUME FIRES.

The stunned Hungarian watches the child fall from his arms.

Sume turns the pistol on the next child, then the next and the next. He kills his children one by one in front of the Hungarian.

VERBAL (V.O.)

He tells him he would rather see his family dead than live another day after this.

Sume walks over to his wife, crying and beaten on the floor and holds up her head. She gives him the strangest look. One of trust perhaps, saturated with fear and humiliation.

He puts the gun between her eyes and fires.

VERBAL (V.O.)

He lets the last Hungarian go, and he goes running. He waits until his wife and kids are in the ground and he goes after the rest of the mob. He kills their kids, he kills their wives, he kills their parents and their parents' friends. We see glimpses of Keyser Sume's rampage. Bodies upon bodies in homes and in the streets. Then the fires.

Stores and homes burn fully engulfed.

VERBAL (V.O.)

He burns down the houses they live in and the stores they work in, he kills people

VERBAL (cont'd)

that owe them money. And like that he was gone. Underground. No one has ever seen him again. He becomes a myth, a spook story that criminals tell their kids at night. If you rat on your pop, Keyser Sume will get you. And nobody really ever believes.

69 INT. RABIN'S OFFICE - DAY

69

KUJAN

Do you believe in him, Verbal?

VERBAL

Keaton always said: "I don't believe in God, but I'm afraid of him." Well I believe in God, and the only thing that scares me is Keyser Sume.

70 INT. WORKSHOP

70

Captain Leo listens to Verbal on the speaker with one ear.

LEO

You give this any weight, Agent Briggs?

BRIGGS

I can introduce you to Dan Metzheiser from Justice. He has a file on Sume in D.C. It's been a hobby of his for a few years. A lot of guys equate him to that reporter on the Incredible Hulk.

LEO

Had you heard of him before.

BRIGGS

On the street? A few times. Outside stuff. Somebody was working for a guy who was working for a guy who got money through Keyser Sume. That kind of shit. Could be an old badge. A hex sign to keep people from fucking with you back when a name meant something.

LEO

But you're here.

BRIGGS

Shit yeah. I got a guy trying to walk out of the hospital on a fried drumstick to get away from Sume. I'll run it up the flagpole.

INT. RABIN'S OFFICE

71

VERBAL

I came clean. I told it like it happened on the boat. So what if I left out how I got there? It's got so many holes in it, the D.A. would've told me to blow amnesty out my ass. So you got what you wanted out of me. Big fucking deal.

KUJAN

And this is why you never told the D.A.

VERBAL

You tell me, Agent Kujan. If I told you the Loch Ness Monster hired me to hit the harbor, what would you say?

KUJAN

Turn state's evidence. Take the stand on this and we'll hear it out.

VERBAL

I've got immunity now. What can you possibly offer me?

KUJAN

If there is a Keyser Sume, he'll be looking for you.

VERBAL

Where's your head, Agent Kujan? Where do you think the pressure's coming from? Keyser Sume - or whatever you want to call him - knows where I am right now. He's got the front burner under your ass to let me go so he can scoop me up ten minutes later. Immunity was just to deal with you assholes. I got a whole new problem when I post bail.

KUJAN

He can get you in jail just as easy. Maybe easier.

VERBAL

And outside he can cut me open and find out how much I know - How much I told you.

KUJAN

So why play into his hands. We can protect you.

VERBAL

Gee, thanks, Dave. Bang-up job so far. Extortion, coercion. You'll pardon me if I ask you to kiss my pucker. The same fuckers that rounded us up and sank us into this mess are telling me they'll bail me out? Fuck you. You think you can catch Keyser Sume? You think a guy like that comes this close to getting fingered and sticks his head out? If he comes up for anything, it will be to get rid of me.

(beat)

After that, my guess is you'll never hear from him again.

72 INT. HOSPITAL ROOM - DAY

72

Kovash spits out a constant river of Hungarian while Bodi tries to keep up, relaying everything to Tracy Fitzgerald.

She sketches frantically while Daniel Metzheiser looks on.

The composite sketch of Keyser Sume is taking form.

73 EXT. OCEAN - DAY

73

A beat-up trawler chugs through the wavy water a few miles off the coast. The shore is a distant streak on the horizon.

A LONE FISHERMAN is hauling in a large net as the boat pulls it slowly along. He heaves as hard as he can.

Tiny fish are tangled in the net, shimmering like coins as they struggle to escape. Lower in the net are larger and larger fish, flopping over one another in vain, unable to get free.

The fisherman pulls at the net harder now, something huge is dragging it down. He lashes the net to the stern and leans over the side, grabbing it beneath the water-line and yanking with all his might.

SUDDENLY, A DEAD BODY bobs up in the net, tangled and twisted in the mesh. The fisherman leaps back in shock.

The body is bloated and totally drained of color from days in the water.

It is the man in the CHECKERED BATHROBE.

INT. WORKSHOP - DAY

74

Rabin enters the room with a stack of papers in his hand.

RABIN

So far it's all gold. I can't find a guy named Redfoot, but a Saul Berg did end up in a parking garage downtown last month. No leads on it until now.

LEO

And the hijackings in New York?

RABIN

The guns Hockney snatched we know about. The hijacked plane with the platinum and gold wiring checks out. Nothing on Keaton's truckload of steel.

LEO

Trace the owners. Go as far back as you can.

RABIN

He's got you thinking.

LEO

Mental masturbation is all.

BRIGGS

Hold him for a while.

LEO

Not a chance. Find out who this Redfoot guy is - and I want to know about the lawyer, Kobayashi.

LOUIS

Here we go again.

Leo turns up the speaker. Verbal's voice prattles on.

VERBAL (O.S.)

That was how I ended up in a barber shop quartet in Skokie, Illinois.

75

INT. RABIN'S OFFICE

75

KUJAN

This is totally irrelevant.

VERBAL

Ohh, but it's not. If I hadn't been nailed in Illinois for running a three

VERBAL (cont'd)

card monte in between sets. I never would have took off for New York. I never would have met Keaton, see. That barber shop quartet was the reason for everything.

KUJAN

Can we just get back to Kobayashi?

VERBAL

The quartet is part of the bit about Kobayashi. The quartet was in my file, along with every other thing I had done since high school, see? Aliases, middle-men. They saw through it all. They knew me better than I did. They knew all of us.

Kujan looks at his watch.

KUJAN

You're stalling, Verbal.

VERBAL

Give a guy a break, huh?

KUJAN

What happened?

Verbal slumps a bit. He realizes his stalling tactic has failed.

VERBAL

We woke up the next morning and Fenster was gone. He couldn't handle the idea of slumming for Sume. He left a note wishing us good luck and took half the money we'd scraped together.

KUJAN

Then what?

VERBAL

McManus was furious. He was talking about tracking him down and ripping his heart out and all sorts of shit. That night we got the call.

KUJAN

What call?

VERBAL

Kobayashi told us where we could find Fenster.

• EXT. BEACH - NIGHT - TWO WEEKS PRIOR

76

Keaton looks out over the ocean and smokes a cigarette.

KEATON

What do you want to do with him?

McManus kneels in the sand. Hockney and Verbal stand behind him, staring at something in front of them.

It is the body of Fred Fenster, literally peppered with bullet holes. McManus stares at him, fighting any flicker of emotion.

McMANUS

I worked five years with Fenster. More jobs, more money than I can count.

KEATON

I'm sorry, McManus.

McMANUS

I want to bury him.

KEATON

No time.

McManus springs to his feet and points a pistol at Keaton. Keaton turns to face him and raises his head. McManus might as well be pointing a feather-duster.

McMANUS

YOU WILL FIND TIME. You're not the only one with debts, man.

KEATON

No shovel.

McMANUS

WITH OUR HANDS.

77

EXT. BEACH - LATER

77

Everyone digs in the sand on the deserted beach with their hands. They are up to their waists in the hole they have scooped out. Fenster's body is a few feet away.

HOCKNEY

This is nuts.

McMANUS

Dig.

HOCKNEY

This is fucking dry sand, man. When he rots, the surfers'll smell him from a hundred yards out.

McMANUS

DIG, YOU FUCKER.

Hockney can see that McManus has truly gone over the edge for now. Keaton gives him a look that says don't argue.

HOCKNEY

Keaton, we gotta go. They're gonna find him.

KEATON

Dig.

VERBAL

What are we gonna do?

HOCKNEY

I can run. I got no problem with that.

KEATON

They don't seem to have a problem with it either.

McMANUS

Nobody runs. I'll kill you if you do.

HOCKNEY

This ain't my boy we're burying. I don't owe anybody.

McMANUS

We got a deal here.

HOCKNEY

Since when?

McMANUS

Since tonight. Nobody does one of us without the rest paying back.

HOCKNEY

Fuck that.

KEATON

It's not payback, Hockney..

McMANUS

It's payback.

KEATON

IT'S NOT PAYBACK. That's not my way and I don't answer to you. It's precaution. You want payback? You want to run? I don't care. I'm going to finish this thing. Not for Fenster, not for anybody else, but for me. This Kobayashi cocksucker isn't going to stand over me.

(Beat)

All of you can go to hell.

Keaton turns and digs furiously with both hands. Hockney takes a moment and slowly starts to do the same.

The four men dig for Fenster. The first to find some rest.

78 INT. RABIN'S OFFICE - DAY - PRESENT

78

Verbal smokes with his good hand shaking badly.

KUJAN

And after they killed Fenster, nobody would run?

VERBAL

I wanted to. I thought we could make it.

KUJAN

Why didn't you say anything?

VERBAL

I tried, believe me, but Keaton wouldn't have it. It was too far-fetched for him. Keaton was a grounded guy. An ex-cop. To a cop, the explanation is never that complicated. It's always simple. There's no mystery on the street, no arch-criminal behind it all. If you got a dead guy and you think his brother did it, you're going to find out you're right. Nobody argued with Keaton. They just set their minds on whacking Kobayashi.

79 EXT. PARKING LOT - NIGHT - TWO WEEKS PRIOR

79

Redfoot's Harley rests on the roof of the Caddy in a mangled heap. The body of the Caddy is riddled with bullet holes.

Redfoot's dead body has been shoved head-first through a hole in the windshield, recognizable only by the trademark red boot.

80 INT. OFFICE BUILDING - DAY

80

Kobayashi walks through the front door of a plush office tower followed by two bodyguards. He heads toward the elevator, failing to notice Hockney a few feet away, reading a newspaper.

We see a wire running from Hockney's ear to his collar.

HOCKNEY

He's coming up.

81 INT. HALLWAY - FORTIETH FLOOR

81

Keaton, McManus and Verbal stand by the six elevators on the fortieth floor. They are all wearing khaki overalls and tool belts with walkie-talkies. They look like servicemen.

All of the elevators have been propped open and stranded.

McManus moves into one of the elevators.

82 INT. ELEVATOR

82

McManus reaches over and pulls out the stop button. The elevator doors close. McManus goes to hit the first floor button.

SUDDENLY, he looks around in surprise. He looks up at the panel that indicates what floor the elevator is on. The numbers are climbing.

McMANUS

Shit.

(Into radio)

Keaton, I'm going up.

KEATON

(On radio)

Say again.

McMANUS

I'm going up. Somebody hit the button.

83 INT. HALLWAY

83

Keaton looks at Verbal. He grabs his radio.

KEATON

Hockney, where is he?

84 INT. LOBBY

84

Hockney glances over his newspaper and sees Kobayashi's bodyguard pushing the elevator button repeatedly.

HOCKNEY

Waiting patiently. Let's get a move on, boys.

85 INT. ELEVATOR

85

The elevator stops on the fiftieth floor. McManus looks around, wondering what to do. The doors open.

A WHITE-HAIRED MAN in a gray suit gets on. He looks at McManus in the way that most white-haired men in suits look at men in khaki overalls. McManus smiles.

McMANUS

What floor, sir?

WHITE-HAIRED MAN

Lobby, please.

McManus fights to maintain a friendly smile. This is obviously the worst floor he could have chosen.

He looks at the buttons. Two rows of thirty buttons numbered one to sixty. McManus presses the one marked "L".

86 INT. HALLWAY

86

Keaton and Verbal listen for anything on the radio.

87 INT. LOBBY

87

One of Kobayashi's bodyguards summons a security guard.

88 INT. ELEVATOR

88

McManus watches the numbers on the panel. They are fifteen floors away from the lobby now. McManus is fidgeting. The white-haired man looks at him out of the corner of his eye with great distaste.

McManus suddenly smiles. He reaches out with his index and middle fingers and runs them down the two rows of buttons. With the flick of his hand he has hit every floor between them and the lobby.

He looks at the white-haired man and smiles wider.

The elevator stops on the tenth floor and the white-haired man gets off with a sneer for McManus.

The doors close behind him. McManus scrambles for the ceiling hatch.

89 INT. LOBBY

89

Hockney is watching Kobayashi's bodyguards argue with the security guard.

HOCKNEY
(Into radio)
It's getting busy down here.

SUDDENLY, the elevator opens. Hockney lets out a sigh of relief. Kobayashi and his bodyguards get on the elevator.

90 INT. ELEVATOR

90

The elevator is empty except for the three men. McManus has vanished. Kobayashi presses a button and they are on the way.

SUDDENLY, the ceiling hatch opens and McManus' arm comes out.

POP - POP. Two shots from a suppressed pistol and the guards drop to the floor, DEAD.

Kobayashi looks up with surprising calm into McManus' barrel.

McManus
Press forty.

91 INT. HALLWAY - FORTIETH FLOOR

91

The elevator opens and Kobayashi is greeted by Keaton and Verbal. McManus drops from the ceiling hatch and pushes him out.

Verbal and McManus grab the dead bodies and drag them out of the elevator. They drag them to the next elevator which has been forced open, revealing an empty shaft.

KEATON
The answer is no.

KOBAYASHI
Mr. Sume will be most -

KEATON
Listen to me, cocksucker. There is no Keyser Sume. If you say his name again, I'll kill you right here.

KOBAYASHI
A strange threat. I can only assume you're here to kill me anyway. Pity about Mr. Redfoot.

McMANUS
Fair trade for Fenster.

The elevator opens and Hockney steps out.

KOBAYASHI
Ahh, Mr. Hockney. Do join us.

KEATON
We know you can get to us, and now you know we can get to you. I'm offering you the chance to call this off.

KOBAYASHI
Mr. Su- My employer has made up his mind. He does not change it.

KEATON
Neither do we.

McMANUS
You got Fenster, you may get more, but you won't get us all. Not before one of us gets to you.

KOBAYASHI
I believe you, Mr. McManus. I quite sincerely do. You would not have been chosen if you were not so capable, but I cannot make this decision. Whatever you can threaten me with is... ludicrous in comparison to what will be done to me if I do not carry out my orders in full.

McMANUS
Just so you know. I'm the guy. I'm the one that's gonna get through to you.

KOBAYASHI
I am sorry, Mr. McManus.
(To Keaton)
I implore you to believe me, Mr. Keaton. Mr. Sume is very real and very determined.

KEATON
We'll see.

McManus holds a pistol to Kobayashi's chin. The lawyer's cool eyes never falter.

KOBAYASHI
Before you do me in, you will let me finish my business with Ms. Finneran first, won't you?

SUDDENLY, Keaton grabs McManus' hand and pulls the gun away before he can shoot.

KEATON

What did you say?

KOBAYASHI

Edie Finneran. She is upstairs in my office for an extradition deposition. I requested she be put on the case personally. She flew out yesterday.

Everyone looks at Keaton.

KOBAYASHI (CONT'D)

No matter. Kill away, Mr. McManus.

KEATON

You're lying.

KOBAYASHI

Am I?

92 INT. HALLWAY - FIFTIETH FLOOR

92

Everyone follows Kobayashi quietly down a dimly lit, oak-lined hallway. Verbal holds a small pistol discreetly in the small of Kobayashi's back.

They come to a glass office foyer. Kobayashi gestures and everyone looks through the glass into the lobby beyond.

EDIE FINNERAN is talking casually with the receptionist.

93 INT. LOBBY

93

Edie glances toward the men in the hall.

Keaton turns quickly on his heels, facing the others. From where Edie stands, it looks as though Kobayashi is talking to a group of harmless maintenance men.

They see A LARGE MAN dressed very much like the two dead bodies left in the hall downstairs. The man notices Kobayashi and the others. He stands and stares menacingly.

KOBAYASHI

Ms. Finneran's escort in Los Angeles. Never leaves her for a moment. I thought you'd like to know she was in good hands.

Keaton's mind races for an alternative. He can find none.

Verbal lowers his gun without being told.

KOBAYASHI (CONT'D)

Get your rest, Gentlemen. The boat will be ready for you on Friday. If I see you or your friends before then, or fail to check in every half hour with that unpleasant looking man in there, Ms. Finneran will find herself the victim of a gruesome violation before she dies. As will your father, Mr. Hockney, and your Uncle Randall in Arizona, Mr. Kint. I might only castrate Mr. McManus' nephew, David. Do I make myself clear?

All of the men surround Kobayashi, aching to kill him.

KOBAYASHI

I'll take care of the dead men downstairs. We'll add them to the cost of Mr. Fenster. Now if you'll excuse me.

Kobayashi walks into the office. Edie turns to greet him.

Keaton slowly turns and watches as they shake hands and talk.

Kobayashi says something they cannot hear and Edie laughs, her back to the window.

Kobayashi smiles over her shoulder at Keaton.

All the while, the bodyguard watches Keaton. He nods politely before Keaton and the others leave. Verbal watches for a moment more and follows.

Another file from Kobayashi's briefcase is laid out on the table. This has a map and a good fifty pages of information in it.

KEATON

It's a logistical nightmare. Close quarters, no advance layout, ten men, maybe twenty.

HOCKNEY

Can we stealth these guys?

KEATON

Doubtful. With all that coke, they'll be ready - which brings me to sunny spot number two. Even if one of us gets through and jacks the boat, we get nothing.

McMANUS

And if we wait for the money?

KEATON

Ten more men at least. In my opinion, it can't be done. Anyone who walks into this won't come out alive.

McMANUS

I'm for waiting for the money.

HOCKNEY

Me too.

VERBAL

Did you hear what he just said?

HOCKNEY

If I'm going in, I want a stake.

VERBAL

But we can't do it.

McMANUS

We have to do it. What's with you man?

VERBAL

I just can't believe we're just gonna walk into certain death.

PAUSE

They all suddenly realize the weight of their situation.

FINALLY:

McMANUS

News said it's raining in New York.

No one knows quite how to respond.

95 EXT. PIER - SAN PEDRO - NIGHT

95

A large boat, sleek and yacht-like, but without finesse. This is a boat for business - heavy and fast. It is moored to the pier.

A large crane hoists a pallet of fuel drums from the dock. It swings slowly over the boat. A man on the dock yells in Spanish to the crane operator.

A black van pulls up to the boat. A group of men in suits walks down the pier and along the side of the boat. They call out in a strange language to the man on dock.

96 EXT. WAREHOUSE

96

Behind an old and weathered building, Keaton and Verbal watch the boat from the shadows.

VERBAL
What are they speaking?

KEATON
Russian, I think. I don't know.

VERBAL
Hungarian?

KEATON
Knock it off.

97 EXT. PIER

97

Five men come up from below deck. They are tense and cautious around the men in suits. Someone speaks in Spanish and someone else in Russian. It takes a moment before anyone speaks the same tongue. They settle on French for both negotiators.

98 EXT. HARBOR

98

Another van is parked a hundred yards away in the shadows.

99 INT. VAN

99

Hockney sits in the van. He picks up a walkie-talkie.

HOCKNEY
Are we ready, kids?

100 INT. WAREHOUSE

100

McManus is crawling through the top rafters of the warehouse. He makes his way to a window in the top where the two halves of the roof join. He lugs a heavy rifle. He stops and grabs his radio.

McMANUS
If I didn't have to stop and answer you,
I would be.

101 EXT. WAREHOUSE

101

KEATON
Everyone shut up. I'm ready. McManus, you better be set up in ten seconds.

McMANUS
(On radio)

Don't wait for me.

KEATON

Make sure someone has my back.

VERBAL

I'm there.

Verbal holds up a subgun with his wobbly hand. Keaton smiles bitterly. He moves to step into the open and stops.

KEATON

I want you to stay here. Understand?

VERBAL

But I thought I -

KEATON

Cover us from here. If we don't make it out, I want you to take the money and go.

VERBAL

(Confused)

Keaton, I can't just -

KEATON

I want you to find Edie. Both of you find some place safe. Tell her what happened - Everything. She knows people. She'll know what to do. If we can't get Kobayashi my way, she'll get him her way.

VERBAL

What if I -

KEATON

Just do what I tell you.

Keaton turns and takes a few steps. He stops and looks back, his face marked with guilt and agony.

KEATON (CONT'D)

Tell her I... Tell her I tried.

Keaton leaves before Verbal can respond. He walks out towards the boat.

He is no more than three feet out of the shadows before the first man sees him.

102 EXT. PIER

102

One of the men in suits starts to yell to the others. Men pull out guns and try to look as cool as they can.

Keaton walks right into the face of all of these men, undaunted. His hands are in his pockets.

Above him, in the darkness, a small window opens at the top of the warehouse. McManus pokes his head out and spies Keaton. He pulls his head in and sticks out the barrel of the rifle.

Keaton marches towards them. The men on the boat jump up onto the pier to join the men in suits. Keaton comes to a stop about twenty feet from fifteen men all together.

103 INT. WAREHOUSE

103

McMANUS'S P.O.V.

McManus stares through the scope of his rifle at the scene. The cross-hairs breeze past Keaton and find a target. A man in a suit.

McMANUS

Pow.

He moves to another and then another, picking up speed and mock-shooting the men. He is steady and quick. It is clear he could take all fifteen in a few seconds.

McMANUS (CONT'D)

Pow-pow-pow-pow-pow-pow. Oswald was a fag.

104 EXT. PIER

104

The men shout questions at Keaton in a number of languages.

105 INT. VAN

105

Hockney bails out and run quickly and quietly through the shadows.

106 EXT. WAREHOUSE

106

Verbal aims his subgun and clicks off the safety.

107 INT. WAREHOUSE

107

McManus still wanders with his scope.

McMANUS

Old McDonald had a farm, ee-aye, ee-aye,
ohh. And on this farm he shot some guys.
Ba-da-bip, ba-da-bing, bang-boom.

108 EXT. PIER

108

Finally two men walk right towards Keaton. The rest train guns on him. They reach for his arms, pointing their guns right at him.

BOOM-BOOM

Two shots, rapid fire, take their heads off.

109 INT. WAREHOUSE

109

McMANUS

ELVIS HAS LEFT THE BUILDING.

He fires as fast as he can.

110 EXT. PIER

110

Keaton pulls a pistol out of each pocket and aims at whatever moves. He fires and runs for cover.

The men from the boat and the men in suits try to peg him, but McManus' sniping has them running.

SUDDENLY, Hockney joins Keaton. They fire in all directions.

Verbal shoots from his position in the shadows. He is all over the place, hardly able to control the gun. Still, he makes an impressive and violent display, filling the air with bullets.

The pier is a mass of running, shooting, dead or dying men.

It is total pandemonium. A killing spree let loose on the unaware by those with the will to do what the other guys would not.

111 INT. CRANE

111

The crane operator opens the door to bail out. He looks down at the gunfight and thinks the better of it. He tries his best to slip down between the seat and the panel.

112 EXT. WAREHOUSE

112

McManus comes repelling down the front of the warehouse. He is facing forward, one hand behind his back to feed the rope out behind him, the other hand firing a subgun.

113 EXT. PIER

113

Hockney is running straight for the boat when he suddenly stops. He glances over his shoulder at the van brought by the men in suits.

He looks ahead at McManus and Keaton blazing for the boat.

FINALLY, he turns and runs back for the van.

He shoots a man point blank in the face and runs over his body as it falls.

He gets to the back door of the van and yanks it open.

The inside is stacked with large wooden crates.

114 INT. VAN

114

Hockney laughs and jumps in, suddenly oblivious to the sound of gunfire. He opens one of the crates and looks inside.

IT IS FILLED WITH MONEY. Cash and negotiable bonds of all kinds.

He smiles.

BOOM

BLOOD sprays all over the money. Hockney looks at it, puzzled.

He turns and sees one of the men in suits holding a shotgun.

Hockney looks down at his own open belly, blood and innards flowing freely.

BOOM - Another shot takes off the top of his head.

115 EXT. PIER

115

McManus runs like a wild man across the dock, heading for the boat.

He shoots in all directions as though he has eyes in the back of his head. He sees Keaton climbing onto the deck of the boat.

McMANUS
KEATON. ON YOUR SIX.

Keaton hears this and spins on his heels in time to see one of the boat men behind him. He fires and kills him instantly.

116 EXT. WAREHOUSE

116

Verbal is wrestling with a new magazine for his gun. He has a great deal of difficulty getting it in. He fumbles with the gun and it goes off, spitting rounds everywhere.

117 EXT. CRANE

117

A single bullet hits one of the barrels on the suspended pallet.

Gasoline pours out through the bullet-hole.

118 INT. CRANE

118

Stray bullets pepper the glass on the cabin of the crane. The operator is hit. He slumps forward, dead, hitting the lever and bringing the crane around.

It wheels slowly towards the boat, swinging the pallet of fuel drums with it.

119 EXT. BOAT

119

Keaton finds the hatch and goes below, shooting a man on his way up the stairs. McManus jumps on board and runs down behind him.

120 EXT. WAREHOUSE

120

Verbal watches them vanish. He hears the muffled sound of gunfire below deck. He walks out from behind the warehouse and limps slowly across the pier.

It is quiet, except for the sounds of screaming, far off in the bowels of the boat and the hum of the crane.

SUDDENLY, Verbal turns - just in time to see the crane swinging around. THE PALLET IS HEADED RIGHT AT HIM.

He ducks at the last possible second and it swoops past, continuing on in a circle.

Verbal breathes quietly. He looks over at the van with the money inside. He looks back at the boat. He stands on the dock, surrounded by the dead, wondering what to do next.

121 INT. RABIN'S OFFICE - DAY - PRESENT

121

KUJAN

Why didn't you run?

VERBAL

I froze up. I thought about Fenster and how he looked when we buried him, then I thought about Keaton. It looked like he might pull it off.

A KNOCK ON THE DOOR.

Rabin steps in and motions for Kujan to come outside.

122 INT. HALLWAY

122

Leo and Jasper Briggs are in the hall. Leo hands Kujan a thick manila folder. Kujan thumbs through it.

RABIN

A fisherman pulled a stiff out of the water this morning. Thrown clear when the boat exploded. Shot once in the head. Two guys from the D.E.A. identified him an hour ago.

KUJAN

And?

RABIN

His name was Arturo Marquez. A petty smuggler out of Argentina. He was arrested in New York last year for trafficking. He escaped to California and got picked up in Long Beach. They were setting up his extradition when he escaped again. Get this Edie Finneran was called in to advise the proceedings.

KUJAN

Kobayashi.

RABIN

So it seems.

BRIGGS

I called Manhattan County and they faxed me a copy of the guys testimony. He was a rat.

Kujan pulls out page after page from the file.

KUJAN

A big fucking rat.

RABIN

Arturo was strongly opposed to going back to prison. So much so that he informed on

RABIN (cont'd)
 close to fifty guys. Guess who he names
 for a finale?

Kujan finds one sheet and notices a paragraph is highlighted.

KUJAN
 Keyser Sume.

RABIN
 There's more.

123 INT. RABIN'S OFFICE - MOMENTS LATER

123

Kujan walks in and sits down in front of Verbal. He smiles.

KUJAN
 I'll tell you what I know. Stop me when
 it sounds familiar.

Verbal is confused.

KUJAN
 There was no dope on that boat.

124 INT. BOAT - NIGHT - ONE WEEK PRIOR

124

Keaton is weaving through tight, low-ceiling corridors, looking in every cabin, working his way towards the bottom of the boat.

ELSEWHERE IN THE BOAT, McManus is tearing though the corridors, seemingly less interested in securing the cargo as he is in killing everyone one board.

He screams like a lunatic, shooting everything in his path, killing some men with his bare hands, shooting others, stabbing others still with a knife he has brought along.

125 INT. CORRIDOR

125

JAIME, one of the men from the boat, is half-pushing, half-helping a thin and sweaty looking MAN IN A CHECKERED BATHROBE towards a cabin at the end of the hall.

The man in the robe is trembling. He seems stricken with fear.

MAN IN ROBE
 He's here. I saw him on deck.

Jaime pushes him inside the cabin and shuts the door.

The man in the robe screams through the closed door, his voice echoing off of the metal bulkheads.

MAN IN ROBE
(CONT'D)
I'M TELLING YOU IT'S KEYSER SUME.

Jaime stands outside the door of the cabin and turns to face down the hall. Off in some other part of the boat, he can hear McManus wailing like a banshee and the ever-less frequent sound of gunshots..

126 INT. HOLD

126

Keaton has come to the four foot high door to the hold. The door is open slightly. Keaton finds this strange. He pushes the door open and steps inside. The hold is empty.

He hears a noise behind him. He wheels around to fire. He sees McManus in the door. His face is covered with blood.

McMANUS
Did you hear what I heard?

KEATON
What happened to you?

McMANUS
Keyser Sume is on the boat.

KEATON
What?

McMANUS
I heard somebody screaming his nuts off.
He said Keyser Sume was on the boat.

KEATON
Are you alright?

McManus rubs some of the blood off with his sleeve.

McMANUS
Huh? Oh, It's not mine.

KEATON
There's no coke.

McManus looks around the hold as though he'll see four and a half tons of dope in some corner where Keaton might have missed it.

The two men look at one another. There is a long, pregnant silence.

McMANUS

Let's get the fuck out of here.

KEATON

Right behind you.

127 INT. CORRIDOR

127

Keaton and McManus step out of the hold, walking slowly and cautiously back from where they came. They hear the sounds of footsteps running on the deck above and the occasional hollered sentence in Spanish.

KEATON

Where's Hockney?

McMANUS

I don't think he made it to the boat.

They come to a corner. They can go left or right.

KEATON

I can't remember which way.

McMANUS

Right -

BOOM - BOOM

Gunshots fill the hallway from behind them. They do not stop to turn around. Keaton goes left, McManus goes right. They run in opposite directions with the sound of gunfire right behind them.

128 INT. HALLWAY - CABIN

128

Jaime squints and cocks his head.

SOMEONE IS COMING. He raises a pistol and crouches by the door.

129 INT. CABIN

129

The man in the bathrobe sits on the foot of the bed watching the door. He hears the sounds of fighting somewhere not too far away.

He crawls over the bed and squeezes between it and the bulkhead. Only the top of his head is visible. He starts to cry.

BOOM - BOOM - Two shots just outside in the hall.

SUDDENLY, the door bursts open. Jaime collapses in a heap on the floor, a bullet hole in his eye.

A FIGURE LOOMS IN THE DOOR

The man in the bathrobe looks up at the figure. We cannot see him.

MAN IN ROBE
I told them nothing.

BOOM

The man in the robe falls dead.

130 EXT. DECK - MOMENTS LATER

130

The boat is quiet now. Keaton walks out onto the deck.

He looks out over the pier and sees Verbal standing in the middle of the carnage, frozen. Their eyes meet. Keaton waves at him as if to shoo him away.

EXT. PIER

131

Verbal hesitates and finally moves towards the van with the money. He looks back over his shoulder and sees Keaton freeing the last line of the boat. Keaton sees him looking and waves again, hurrying him along.

Verbal turns away and focuses on the van.

132 EXT. DECK

132

Keaton hears a noise behind him. He swings around and points his gun at McManus again. He puts the gun down.

McManus smiles. He walks slowly across the deck towards Keaton. Something is not right about him.

McMANUS
Strangest thing...

He slumps to the deck. Keaton rushes over to him. He kneels down and sees a pipe sticking out of the back of McManus's neck.

133 EXT. PIER

133

As Verbal approaches the van he looks to his left at the huge loading crane. He glances upward along the giant arm as it swings steadily on.

Somewhere, off in the distance, the sound of SIRENS can be heard.

134 EXT. DECK

134

Keaton kneels by McManus, trembling with rage. After a moment he stands, looking down at McManus' dead body.

135 EXT. PIER

135

SUDDENLY, Verbal realizes something. He turns and goes to call out a warning to Keaton. He is too late.

136 EXT. DECK

136

Keaton never sees the crane coming.

WHAM

The pallet of barrels hits him square in the back and sends him flying into the wheel house of the boat.

137 EXT. PIER

137

Verbal runs towards the boat as fast as he can.

SUDDENLY, he stops dead in his tracks.

From where he stands, he can just make out the figure of a TALL, THIN MAN on the pier. He moves quietly and calmly in the shadows towards the crane, looking out of place in his expensive suit.

Verbal strains, but he cannot see this man's face and yet we know he knows.

Something about this man terrifies him beyond belief.

138 EXT. DECK

138

Keaton is still for a moment. Finally, he tries to move, but finds he cannot move his legs. A large cut runs the length of his face, bleeding badly. He manages to move himself with great effort into a sitting position, leaning against the wheel house.

This is where we found him in the beginning.

Keaton looks down towards the end of the boat and sees the pallet swing around to a stop.

SUDDENLY, it lowers to the deck on the bow.

Someone has gotten control of the crane.

The first trickling of the stream of gasoline from the leaking barrel flows past Keaton's strangely angled feet. He slumps back and looks up at the dark night sky.

SIRENS in the distance grow slightly louder.

139 INT. RABIN'S OFFICE - DAY - PRESENT

139

KUJAN

And that's when you say in your statement
that you saw...

Kujan picks up his copy of Verbal's statement to the D.A.

KUJAN (CONT'D)

A man in a suit with a slim build. Tall.

VERBAL

Wait a minute.

KUJAN

(Looking at watch)

I don't have a minute. Are you saying it
was Keyser Sume? You told the D.A. you
didn't know who it was.

Verbal is drowning in Kujan's interrogation. He looks dazed.

VERBAL

I - there had to be dope there.

KUJAN

Don't shine me, Verbal. No more stalling.
You know what I'm getting at.

VERBAL

I don't.

KUJAN

YES YOU DO. YOU KNOW WHAT I'M GETTING AT.
THE TRUTH. TRY TO TELL ME YOU DIDN'T
KNOW. TRY TO TELL ME YOU SAW SOMEONE KILL
KEATON.

For the first time, Verbal stands and tries to move away from Kujan, but Kujan stays in his face, backing him into a corner. Verbal shields himself with his hands and shuts his eyes.

KUJAN (CONT'D)
TRY TO KEEP LYING TO ME NOW. I KNOW
EVERYTHING.

VERBAL
I don't know what you're talking about.

KUJAN
YOU KNOW. YOU'VE KNOWN THIS WHOLE FUCKING
TIME. GIVE IT TO ME.

Verbal looks into Kujan's eyes with genuine terror. Kujan's face is red, his body trembles. His locomotive breathing is the only sound in the room.

VERBAL
I don't understand what you're saying. I
saw Keaton get shot, I swear to you.

KUJAN
Then why didn't you help him?

VERBAL
I WAS AFRAID, OKAY? Somehow, I was sure
it was Keyser Sume at that point. I
couldn't bring myself to raise my gun to
him.

KUJAN
But Keaton...

VERBAL
It was Keyser Sume, Agent Kujan. I mean
the Devil himself. How do you shoot the
Devil in the back?

Verbal holds up a shaking, twisted hand.

VERBAL (CONT'D)
What if you miss?

140 EXT. PIER - NIGHT - ONE WEEK PRIOR

Verbal is in the shadows, watching as the man in a suit strides across the deck over to Keaton, stopping to relieve himself on a small fire on the deck.

He walks up and stands over Keaton. The two men exchange words and the man in the suit pulls out a pistol. He points it at Keaton's head.

RED AND BLUE LIGHTS FLASH BEHIND VERBAL

140

Verbal turns. He can just make out two police cars coming in the distance. He runs for cover, hiding in the tangle of tubes and metal struts at the base of the crane.

BANG

Verbal hears a shot from the deck of the boat. He turns in time to see the man in the suit running across the deck toward the gangway.

Verbal can barely see the man from where he is now. Keaton's body is completely obscured at this angle. The man in the suit is covered by shadows and the poor angle from behind the crane. Verbal strains to see but he cannot.

The man in the suit stops long enough to pull out a lighter.

He bends down to the deck of the boat and ignites the gasoline. He runs off as more police cars arrive.

LIGHTS FLOOD THE PIER

Police are everywhere. The sound of radios and running feet fill the air.

A BRIGHT LIGHT shines directly on Verbal from behind.

VOICE (O.S.)
DON'T MOVE. LET ME SEE YOUR HANDS.

Verbal does as he is told.

141 INT. RABIN'S OFFICE - DAY - PRESENT

141

KUJAN
Arturo Marquez. Ever hear of him?

VERBAL

Wha- No.

KUJAN
He was a stool pigeon for the Justice Department. He swore out a statement to Federal Marshals that he had seen and could positively identify one Keyser Summe and had intimate knowledge of his business, including, but not exclusive to, drug trafficking and murder.

VERBAL

I never heard of him.

KUJAN

His own people were selling him to a gang of Hungarians. Most likely the same Hungarians that Sume all but wiped out back in Turkey. The money wasn't there for dope. The Hungarians were going to buy the one guy that could finger Sume for them.

VERBAL

I said I never heard of him.

KUJAN

But Keaton had. Edie Finneran was his extradition advisor. She knew who he was and what he knew.

VERBAL

I don't -

KUJAN

There were no drugs on that boat. It was a hit. A suicide mission to whack out the one man that could finger Keyser Sume, so Sume had a few thieves put to it. Men he knew he could march into certain death.

VERBAL

But how - wait. You're saying Sume sent us to kill someone?

KUJAN

I'm saying Keaton did.

Verbal cannot grasp this. He squints, trying to understand.

KUJAN (CONT'D)

Verbal, he left you behind for a reason. If you all knew Sume could find you anywhere, why was he ready to send you off with the money when he could have used you to take the boat?

VERBAL

He wanted me to live.

KUJAN

Why did he want you to live? A one time dirty cop without a loyalty in the world finds it in his heart to save a worthless rat-cripple? No, sir. Why?

VERBAL

Edie.

KUJAN

I don't buy that reform story for a minute. And even if I did, I certainly don't believe he would send you to protect her. So why?

VERBAL

Because he was my friend.

KUJAN

No, Verbal. You weren't friends. Keaton didn't have friends. He saved you because he wanted it that way. It was his will.

Verbal grinds to a mental halt, trying to grasp the implication.

SUDDENLY:

VERBAL

No...

KUJAN

Keaton was Keyser Sume.

VERBAL

NO.

KUJAN

The kind of guy who could wrangle the wills of men like Hockney and McManus. The kind of man who could engineer a police line-up from all his years of contacts in N.Y.P.D.

Verbal stands on wobbly legs, shaking with anger.

VERBAL

NO, NO, NO, NO, NO.

KUJAN

THE KIND OF MAN THAT COULD HAVE KILLED EDIE FINNERAN.

A strange look crosses Verbal's face. Shock perhaps, or revelation.

KUJAN (CONT'D)

They found her yesterday in a hotel in Pennsylvania. Shot twice in the head.

It starts to sink in with Verbal. His eyes swell.

VERBAL

Edie...

KUJAN

He used all of you to get him on that boat. He couldn't get on alone and he had to pull the trigger himself to make sure he got his man. The one man that could identify him.

VERBAL

This is all bullshit.

KUJAN

He left you to stay behind and tell us he was dead. You saw him die, right? Or did you? You had to hide when the first police cars showed up. You heard the shot, just before the fire but you didn't see him die.

VERBAL

I knew him. He would never -

KUJAN

He programmed you to tell us just what he wanted you to. Customs has been investigating him for years. He knew we were close. You said it yourself. Where is the political pressure coming from? Why are you being protected? It's Keaton making sure you tell us what you're supposed to. Immunity is your reward.

VERBAL

BUT WHY ME? WHY NOT HOCKNEY OR FENSTER OR McMANUS? I'm a cripple. I'm stupid. Why me?

Verbal hears the weight of his words and falls back in his chair, Kujan looks at him with some pity, but he is too far in to stop.

KUJAN

Because you're a cripple, Verbal. Because you're stupid. Because you were weaker than them. Because you couldn't see far enough into him to know the truth.

Verbal is crying now. He shakes his head, eyes closed.

KUJAN (CONT'D)

If he's dead, Verbal - if what you say is true, then it won't matter. It was his idea to hit the Taxi Service in New York, wasn't it? Tell me the truth.

VERBAL

(Sobbing)

It was all Keaton. We followed him from the beginning.

Kujan smiles with triumphant satisfaction.

VERBAL (CONT'D)

I didn't know. I saw him die. I believe he's dead. Christ -

KUJAN

Why lie about everything else, then?

VERBAL

You know what it's like, Agent Kujan, to know you'll never be good? Not good like you. You got good all fucked around. I mean a stand up guy. I grew up knowing I was never going to be good at anything 'cause I was a cripple. Shit, I wasn't even a good thief. But I thought the one thing I could be good at was a keeping my mouth shut - keeping the code. I didn't want to tell you for my dignity, that's all, and you robbed me, Agent Kujan. You robbed me.

Kujan puts the coffee mug on the desk and holds up the microphone. Verbal actually manages to snort a laugh, but only briefly, overcome by an apparent wave of nausea.

KUJAN

You're not safe on your own.

VERBAL

You think he's...?

KUJAN

Is he Keyser Sume? I don't know, Verbal. It seems to me that Keyser Sume is a shield. Like you said, a spook story, but I know Keaton - and someone out there is pulling strings for you. Stay here and let us protect you.

VERBAL

I'm not bait. No way. I post today.

KUJAN

You posted twenty minutes ago. Captain Leo wants you out of here a.s.a.p., unless you turn state's.

VERBAL

I'll take my chances, thank you. It's tougher to buy the cheapest bag-man than it is to buy a cop.

KUJAN

Where are you going to go, Verbal? You gonna run? Turn states evidence. You might never see trial. If somebody wants to get you, you know they'll get you out there.

VERBAL

Maybe so, but I'm no rat, Agent Kujan. You tricked me, is all. I won't keep my mouth shut 'cause I'm scared. I'll keep it shut cause that's the way. I let Keaton down by getting caught - Edie Finneran too. And if they kill me, it's because they'll hear I dropped dime. They'll probably hear it from you.

Verbal stands, mustering his shattered dignity and walks towards the door. Rabin opens it for him from outside.

For once Kujan cannot bring himself to look at Verbal.

Verbal turns to the door, stopping to look Rabin in the eye.

VERBAL (CONT'D)

Fuckin' cops.

He steps out of the room and into the hall. Rabin follows him.

142 INT. HOSPITAL - DAY

142

Daniel Metzheiser comes out of Arkosh Kovash's room with a single sheet of 15x20 inch paper in his hand. He inspects the sketch with great interest. He folds the edges of the paper back to make it smaller.

143 INT. HOSPITAL RECEPTION ROOM

143

Metzheiser walks behind the reception desk without asking the nurse for permission and helps himself to the fax machine.

144 INT. DEPOT - LATER

144

Verbal is downstairs in the depot of the police station picking up his personal belongings.

A FAT, WHITE-HAIRED COP is checking off the items as he takes them out of the tray in which they are kept.

COP

One watch: gold. One cigarette lighter: gold. One wallet: brown -

From far down the hall, Captain Leo watches as Verbal collects his personal items and shuffles on his lame leg toward the exit.

145 INT. DISPATCHER'S OFFICE

145

Jasper Briggs stands by a fax machine. A green light comes on next to a digital display.

The display reads: RECEIVING

5 INT. RABIN'S OFFICE

146

Kujan stares solemnly at the bulletin board, drinking from Rabin's coffee cup. Rabin sits at the desk, sifting through the mound of papers as though considering organizing them once and for all.

RABIN

You still don't know shit.

KUJAN

I know what I wanted to know about Keaton.

RABIN

Which is shit.

KUJAN

No matter. He'll have to know how close we came.

RABIN

Keyser Sume or not, if Keaton's alive he'll never come up again.

KUJAN

I'll find him.

RABIN

Waste of time.

KUJAN
 (To himself)
 A rumor is not a rumor that doesn't die.

RABIN
 What?

KUJAN
 Nothing. Something I - forget it.

Kujan shakes his head. He gestures to the desk.

KUJAN (CONT'D)
 Man, you're a fucking slob.

Rabin regards the mess of his office.

RABIN
 Yeah. It's got it's own system though. It all makes sense when you look at it right. You just have to step back from it, you know? You should see my garage, now that's a horror-show...

Kujan is not listening. He has been staring at the bulletin board, lost in thought, his unfocused eyes drifting across the mess of papers, not looking at anything at all.

147 EXT. STREET

147

Verbal steps out into the sunlight, putting on a pair of cheap sunglasses. He looks up and down the crowded street. People on their way to and from lunch, no doubt.

Cars choke the street in front of the police department as they wait for pedestrians to clear the way.

148 INT. DISPATCHER'S OFFICE

148

A single sheet of paper comes out of the fax machine, face down.

149 INT. RABIN'S OFFICE

149

Kujan still stares at the bulletin board.

SUDDENLY, Kujan's face changes. He leans in closer to the bulletin board and squints his eyes. His face changes again.

First a look of puzzlement, then confusion - finally realization.

The coffee cup tumbles from his hand. It hits the floor with the SMASH of cheap porcelain. Coffee splatters everywhere.

Rabin snaps out of his droning and looks up in surprise.

KUJAN'S P.O.V.

Kujan is staring not at what is on the bulletin board, but at the bulletin board itself.

His eyes follow the aluminum frame, mounted firmly to the wall. One might note it's sturdy construction and it's convenient size. Big enough to hold a lifetime of forgotten and disregarded notes and facts. Years of police trivia that has been hung and forgotten with the intention of finding a use for it all someday. One might want such a bulletin board for ones self. One would look to see who makes such a bulletin board.

Kujan's eyes are locked on a metal plate bearing the manufacturer's name.

It reads: QUARTET - SKOKIE, ILLINOIS

Kujan's eyes flash all over the bulletin board. He finds a picture of Rabin in the far corner. He stands beside a scale in fishing gear. He proudly holds a hand out to his freshly caught Marlin. His eyes skim quickly over and stop on an 8 1/2x11 fax sheet of what must be a THREE HUNDRED POUND BLACK MAN. Kujan glazes over his name, it is irrelevant. His aliases stand out.

Slavin, BRICKS, Shank, REDFOOT, Theo, Rooster...

KUJAN'S EYES WIDEN with sudden realization. He runs for the door.

His foot crushes the broken pieces of Rabin's coffee cup. The cup that hovered over Verbal's head for two hours.

Kujan is in too much of a hurry to notice the two words printed on the jagged piece that had been the bottom of the cheap mug.

KOBAYASHI PORCELAIN.

150 EXT. HALLWAY

150

Kujan is sprinting wildly down the hall for the stairs.

151 EXT. STREET

151

Verbal looks behind him and sees Captain Leo standing just inside the doorway, watching him in the way that cops look at people they cannot place in the category of idiot citizen, or stupid criminal.

Verbal smiles politely, meekly at Leo and walks down the steps into the moving throng.

152 INT. DEPOT

152

Kujan runs past the fat, white haired cop at the desk where Verbal had only moments before picked up his belongings. Rabin is right behind him, a look of absolute confusion on his face.

153 EXT. POLICE STATION

153

Captain Leo stands in the doorway, enjoying a cigarette. Kujan nearly barrels into him.

KUJAN

WHERE IS HE? DID YOU SEE HIM?

LEO

The Cripple? He went that way.

Leo gestures towards the vast crowd on it's way everywhere.

Kujan runs into the crowd, looking around frantically.

154 EXT. SIDEWALK

154

Verbal limps his way carefully across the sidewalk, avoiding people as best as he can.

He looks over his shoulder, getting farther away from the police station. He can see Captain Leo and Rabin on the steps, looking around with strange, lost expressions on their faces.

He does not notice the car creeping along the curb beside him.

155 INT. CAR

155

DRIVER'S P.O.V.

The driver's hands tap the wheel patiently. His eyes follow Verbal as he fumbles through the crowd.

156 EXT. SIDEWALK

156

Kujan pushes and shoves, looking this way and that.

157 EXT. STREET

157

LOW ANGLE on the feet of dozens of people.

Verbal's feet emerge from the crowd on the far side. They hobble along the curb.

SUDDENLY, the right foot seems to relax a little, the inward angle straightens itself out in a few paces and the limp ceases as though the leg has grown another inch.

CRANE UP VERBAL'S BODY

Verbal's hands are rummaging around in his pockets. The good left hand comes up with a pack of cigarettes, the bad right hand comes up with a lighter. The right hand flexes with all of the grace and coordination of a sculptor's, flicking the clasp on the antique lighter with the thumb, striking the flint with the index finger. It is a fluid motion, somewhat showy.

Verbal lights a cigarette and smiles to himself. He turns and sees the car running along side.

3 INT. DISPATCHER'S OFFICE

158

Jasper Briggs pulls the sheet out of the fax machine and turns it over, revealing the composite sketch of Keyser Sume.

Though crude and distorted, one cannot help but notice how much it looks like VERBAL KINT.

159 EXT. STREET

159

The car stops. The driver gets out.

IT IS KOBAYASHI, or the man we have come to know as such. He smiles to Verbal. Verbal steps off of the curb, returning the smile as he opens the passenger door and gets in.

The man called Kobayashi gets in the driver seat and pulls away.

A moment later, Agent David Kujan of U.S. Customs wanders into the frame, looking around much in the way a child would when lost at the circus. He takes no notice of the car pulling out into traffic, blending in with the rest of the cars filled with people on their way back to work.

BLACK